



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# **Accreditation Report** **for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:**

**Social Anthropology and History**  
**Institution: University of the Aegean**  
**Date: 3 October 2020**

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Social Anthropology and History** of the **University of the Aegean** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Social Anthropology and History** of the **University of the Aegean** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Professor Anastasia Karakasidou** (Chair), Wellesley College, U.S.A.
- 2. Victor Roudometof**, University of Cyprus, Cyprus
- 3. Maria Antoniou**, Pace University, U.S.A.
- 4. Agapi Filini**, El Colegio de Michoacán, México

## **II. Review Procedure and Documentation**

The Panel was superbly prepared for the review and they provided ample documentation. All meetings were conducted via zoom, from Monday 28/9/2020 to Wednesday 30/9/2020.

During the September 30<sup>th</sup> online meetings there was a technical problem with the Internet connection, as the Vodafone system in Greece was facing problems at-large. That impacted one of the EEAP members and imposed some technical constraints in his ability to participate. But Ms. Fani Mouxiti was quick to respond and bring all participants into the room via mobile phones. At the same time, the department provided us access to short videos in order to have a visual representation of the buildings, grounds, and library. Overall, the review went smoothly, and the documentation was more than adequate.

### III. Study Programme Profile

The Department of Social Anthropology and History at the University of the Aegean traces its origins to 1984 when the University was first established. It was originally named “Department of History and Social Anthropology,” and started admitting graduate students in 1987. The following year (1988), it began functioning as a four-year undergraduate program. In 1989, it changed its name to “Department of Social Anthropology,” but in 2002, it acquired its final title “Department of Social Anthropology and History.” It belongs to the University’s School of Social Sciences, along with the departments of Sociology, Geography, and Cultural Technology and Communication.

The department’s profile is distinguished by its unique combination of Social Anthropology and History and the faculty work hard to teach undergraduate students the two disciplines and train them in the two methodologies. In addition, they offer courses on Political Economy, Political Philosophy and Linguistics, while students are also encouraged to take elective courses in other Social Science departments. In addition, students have opportunities to participate in the department’s four Research Laboratories, as well as the newly founded and important Observatory of Migration Crisis Παρατηρητήριο Προσφυγικής Κρίσης). Throughout Greece, there are only three departments that teach anthropology, and while the department under review was the first, it continues to be unique since it incorporates the study of History in a unique way. For example, the Department at Panteion University (established in 2004) does not offer history courses, while the department in the University of Thessaly (established in 1998) includes Archaeology that makes coherence and curriculum balance difficult.

The department employs a total number of 22 faculty of which 12 are male and 10 are female, and we can safely say that women are equally represented in the teaching staff. But, we would like to point to a discrepancy in the rank: out of the six full professors, only one is a woman. At the same time, most of the female faculty (6) are at the assistant professor rank. A total of 946 students are presently enrolled, while a total of 1335 students have graduated from the program.

While most of the teaching and administration buildings are located at the outskirts of the town of Mytilini on the University’s campus (Lofos) the department’s faculty offices, Research Laboratories and seminar rooms are located in three buildings located in the center of the town (Binnio, ATE and Karandoni). The University’s Library is also located in the center of the town. The impending completion of a new building on the campus dedicated to the School of Social Sciences, and a new Library building, will eventually solve this problem of decentralization and will make it easier for the students to have their classes, teachers and administrators all located on campus.

Given Greece’s financial crisis, and the most recent COVID-19 pandemic, only 67% of the enrolled students have been active. While this causes concern, the EEAP firmly believes that when socio-economic conditions return to normalcy, the department will be able to function with a full body of active students.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.*

*The quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.*

*In particular, in order to carry out this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:*

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

### Study Programme Compliance

A total of 44 courses are needed for the completion of the degree, 24 of which are required during the first two years of study, while 17 are electives, and 3 are required seminars and practical training. According to government directives, the department's graduates can be

employed in research institutions, secondary education, museums, local government and hold various positions in the public and private sector.

The Department of Social Anthropology and history appears to be committed to offer the highest quality of education to its students, to produce new knowledge under the auspices of academic freedom, transparency, and self-evaluation. The Department reviews its pedagogical practices every spring semester and does not hesitate to make changes that would make its vision successful. Faculty and administrative staff feel responsible towards their students, their University and the academic community-at-large.

The department's curriculum (Οδηγός Σπουδών) appears to be well-structured and easy to navigate through. The material covered in the courses is rich and in accordance with the ECTS program. An equal number of anthropology and history courses are offered every year, while students feel free to attend courses on Economics, Philosophy, Linguistics, as well as courses offered by the other Social Science departments. The faculty clearly state in their syllabi what is expected from the students, and they attain a balance between their teaching and research/writing obligations. They engage students in their own research, thus giving them opportunities for further advancement of knowledge and methodology. They supervise the Summer Training Practice (Θερινή Πρακτική Άσκηση) and overall offer students opportunities to get work experience outside the classroom. At the same time, the department invites students to the Tuesday and Wednesday seminars, where outside scholars present their work and engage them in ongoing theoretical debates and disciplinary trends.

Students are given the chance to evaluate the courses and the instructor at the end of each semester, and although the majority of the students do not fill the questionnaire, the faculty insists on hearing their voices and take their evaluations into consideration. The department overall evaluates itself once a year and indicates compliance with the recommendations.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

In order for the curriculum to be less Greco- or Euro-centric, the Panel recommends that the department introduces more courses that touch upon global anthropology and history. At a time when the discipline of anthropology is under scrutiny in the US, given the discipline's connection to European colonialism and US imperialism, it is important to educate Greek students on the same questions and problems. They learn, indeed, the discipline's methodology, but they should also receive the necessary tools to evaluate the history of the discipline as it arose and grew out of the unequal encounter of Euro-Americans with indigenous populations. For example, the EEAP was impressed with the work of the recently established Observatory of



Migration Crisis and including courses on the cultures and societies of the migrants/refugees will enhance the education of the students. The EEAP also encourages the department to find non-competitive ways to promote and recognize the students who excel in their studies. A paper competition, or a small student conference where they present their summer training and/or research might be a good idea.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.**

*Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

*Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:*

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active participation of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- *the option to provide work experience to the students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution*

### Study Programme Compliance

The Department was evaluated in 2013 and has attempted to implement the changes recommended by the external committee. The regulatory framework, as set out in the HAHE mandate, facilitates the application of internal official procedures to redesign the curriculum. The EEAP has determined that the study program has been designed based on appropriate, relevant and suitable standards. It takes into account relevant factors pertaining to the Department's overall goals and strategic objectives. In particular, the study program helps students to develop their critical skills, a point repeatedly made by the faculty during their presentations. There is further very good synergy with the other departments housed in the same Faculty.

Currently, there are 942 undergraduate students formally enrolled in the Social Anthropology and History major – with approximately 600+ regularly taking coursework. These figures are largely in line with the mode of operation in Greek universities. The overall figures appear relatively stable over the years. Being a peripheral university, this major suffers from the incoming students' desire to transfer to universities closer to their residences (which helps students curtail their expenses). This issue was noted also in the previous external evaluation of

the Department. The EEAP was informed that it is expected that new institutionalized nationwide restrictions in the students' ability to ask for transfer should curtail the flow of students from a provincial university toward Greece's large central universities.

As the faculty members pointed out and as observed also by the previous external evaluation of the Department, the Social Anthropology and History major is unique in Greece's higher education system, as it is based on a close relationship between the two disciplines. The curriculum is rich and comprehensive. Upon entering the Department students are informed about their program of studies through an online student guide. The guide is complete, concise and appropriate. Students can consult the Department's academic advisor who offers them guidance and clarifications to their questions.

Implicitly students can participate in their own curriculum design. The curriculum enhances student participation in creating their own program of studies during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year, during which most courses are electives. The curriculum is therefore rationally structured and clearly articulated, providing students with foundational knowledge over their first 4 semesters and allowing for flexibility and specialization thereafter. The curriculum design provides smooth student progression toward graduation. The anticipated workload is in line with the ECTS system; and the credits are justified by the learning outcomes.

Student evaluations are optional and participation is limited. In order to determine the reasons for this limited participation the Department conducted in 2018-2019 a survey among its students. The respondents mainly reported that they did not know of the existence of the evaluations' process and/or did not believe that their input would make a difference. Many students reported a willingness to participate in the future provided that their input would be taken into account.

The Department has institutionalized a transparent and cohesive process of curriculum review and design. The curriculum is in line with the concept of continuous improvement. The survey the Department conducted to determine the employability of its graduates offers some promising evidence: approximately 2/3 of the graduates surveyed are employed in the private sector and about 1/3 in the public sector. However, the overall unemployment rate among alumni has not been provided to the EEAP (although a panel member asked specifically this question).

The EEAP has noted that the Department cooperates extensively with external stakeholders, mostly from the public sector and/or NGOs. That is done mostly through internships (practical training consisting of 6 ECTS), which take place over the summer and is an integral part of the course curriculum. Stakeholders are well versed in the department's areas and their mission is generally in line with the Department. Internship is an option for all students. The internship program works well. The EEAP has been informed that because of the necessity to offer health insurance the participation of the private sector in the internship program is limited. Certainly, the need to expand the availability of internship options onto the private sector is recognized.

The EEAP has met virtually with students from different years of studies. Students ascertained their satisfaction with the program and the faculty. Teaching is well linked with research. In fact, students are invited to participate in a weekly research seminar series (each TUE and WED in the course of the semester). Of particular importance is the use of both synchronous and

asynchronous learning in teaching, which is noteworthy in Greece's higher education system (through the e-class on line system). Faculty mostly teach courses in their fields of expertise. The classweb on line system allows students easy access to their grades and other student-oriented administrative services.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Student participation in the evaluation process could be increased and become institutionalized at a higher level. The EEAP recommends that the Department should take the necessary formal and informal steps to increase the participation rate for student evaluations.

In order for the Department to have a sense of the strength of its credentials in the labor market, it is critical to know the alumni's unemployment record. The EEAP recommends that the Department address this issue in future surveys of its alumni.

The EEAP recommends that the Department should examine various options for expanding the internships' availability into the private sector. The Department could use the experience of other programs in Greece's higher education system as a guide with regard to creative ways that formal obstacles to the private sector's active participation could be removed.

### Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.**

*Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.*

*The student-centred learning and teaching process*

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement;*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

*In addition :*

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

#### Study Programme Compliance

This undergraduate program is unique in Greece since it has established a strong dialogue between the two disciplines, Social Anthropology and History. It is characterized by a student-centred approach (φοιτητοκεντρική προσέγγιση) which ensures the high standards of the program. Students are supported from the beginning of the program by an advisor who is accessible and provides assistance for any academic and other issue.

The program offers a wide diversity of courses not usually seen in other Social Sciences institutions in Greece. Courses are taught by highly specialized and distinguished (nationally and internationally) faculty, who are engaged in active research projects, and continuously strive to

involve students in their projects. Moreover, the courses are continuously updated and/or new courses are introduced, something that is very appealing to students. The courses are described in full detail in the Study Guide (Οδηγός Σπουδών) and also on the electronic platform of the Faculty (Open eClass).

The electronic platform is outstanding and very well designed. All information regarding every single aspect of the academic life of the Department is uploaded on the platform: student records, courses, information regarding boarding, library access to electronic books and journals among others.

The study program is divided in 2 cycles and compulsory courses are taught in the first cycle (first and second year). Due to the large number of students who enroll in the compulsory courses, interaction between professors and students is limited. However, professors are always available to solve any academic or other enquiries and an academic tutor is assigned during the enrollment process. Professors make recourse to a variety of grading methods which are constantly evaluated and improved: exams, seminars, mid-term assessment (πρόοδοι), and multiple choice examinations, summer fieldwork and the final examinations or thesis (this latter is optional and is normally taken by students with a clear research focus in their career).

A certain flexibility in the grading process may be observed since students who undertake a thesis essay are exempt from three courses. Some assessment methods are preferred to others; some students, for example, view negatively the multiple-choice assessment which, they argue, is detrimental to the development of critical thinking. It is noteworthy that the evaluation of students is very transparent and is explicitly stated in the course syllabus.

Due to the fact that currently classes and exams are conducted online, certain measures have been taken to avoid plagiarism (the online tool turnitin) and ensure transparency. During the second cycle of studies students can take elective courses which allows for the specialization in more specific subjects. The Panel commends the diversity of these elective courses both from within and outside the Department. The relationship between the Department and other Departments such as Geography, Environment and Sociology for example is worth mentioning since it allows for the fruitful exchange of ideas between the disciplines and many students continue their studies to the postgraduate level.

Students are asked to evaluate the quality of courses by means of a questionnaire given at the end of each course or, exceptionally, before an exam but it has not been very successful. A new, shorter questionnaire has been developed, in order to address this lack of participation on behalf of the students.

Due to the low number of students admitted every year, a close relationship is established between students and professors the beginning of the academic year, which may be considered an advantage compared to the higher number of students admitted yearly in other Social Sciences Departments based in major Greek towns such as Athens or Thessaloniki . Special needs are addressed with the aid of seminars (φροντιστήρια) which take place on a regular basis.

One important part of their studies are the summer practical training, which involves research or community work and their main objective is the development of special skills and the acquisition of work experience by means of specialized activities supervised both by the host

institution (Archive, Museum, Local Authorities among others) and the tutor. Due to the current refugee phenomenon professors and students are actively engaged in the Observatory of Refugee and Migration Crisis in the Aegean (Παρατηρητήριο Προσφυγικής και Μεταναστευτικής Κρίσης στο Αιγαίο) which has drawn international attention and has resulted in a productive collaboration between members of staff and academics from international institutions. It also received a Wenner Gren Foundation award (2017-2018) and has created its own web page (<https://refugeeobservatory.aegean.gr/>) which is daily updated with research results and information regarding the grave refugee crisis in Europe.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Although the student-to-faculty ratio is reasonable it would be desirable to offer more comparative courses in Cultural Anthropology. The Greek crisis of the past few years has undoubtedly affected the successful operation of Greek Universities in general. One of the aspect that needs to be urgently addressed is the low number of students who finish their degree According to information provided by the Department the main reason is the economic cost to study in a University at the periphery: a high number of students solicit their transfer to a University in mainland Greece whenever it is possible in order to reduce costs. Due to the overuse of the ease of transfer, the Ministry of Education has elevated the base points to 2,500 to make it more difficult for students to transfer.

The Department has addressed this issue with more rooms for boarding available and also, free meals offered throughout the day at the Students Cafeteria.

Another recommendation regards the use of multiple-choice tests which must be reviewed and if necessary, eliminated since it is perceived as very “automated and impersonal” by some students. Therefore, the Panel strongly recommends the revision of multiple tests as an evaluation tool.

The English language course needs also to be reviewed in order to improve some aspects since much of the reading sources are in English and students find the terminology especially difficult.

The Panel congratulates the Department for their diverse research projects which actively engage students in subjects such as migration, gender and diversity which play a relevant and active role in addressing challenging social issues.

## Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).**

*Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.*

*Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.*

*Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).*

### Study Programme Compliance

The number of students admitted each year is determined by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs in Greece. Although the Greek admissions system is highly competitive, the Department presents one of the lowest entry base points among the Social Sciences departments in Greece. Thus, a large number of students admitted present specific learning and teaching needs derived from the systemic academic deficiencies of Secondary Education in Greece. There is a welcoming event which aims at providing orientation to students as does the very elaborate Study Guide and the well-organised electronic platform.

One of the greatest challenges for the Department is the academic profile of the students who enroll since some present special difficulties in critical reading and writing. In fact, it was unanimously stated by the Department that students are “re-educated” during the 3rd semester of studies, that is, this is the time they are able to satisfactorily read and write as reflected in their higher grades as well. The Faculty constantly addresses these issues in their annual internal evaluation and the use of compulsory seminars (on Tuesdays and Wednesdays). The Seminars are taught to a reduced number of students (10 to 15) and ensure a personal relationship with students by means of personalized tuition and hands-on exercises.

The compulsory courses include introductory courses, and some professors apply mid-term exams “πρόοδοι” as well as a final exam. Upon completion of their studies students obtain a Diploma.

Students are strongly encouraged to take courses in other European Universities. Erasmus+, the official European Programme is the only student exchange programme which allows the mobility of students within the countries of the European Union and partner countries. Despite the limited places available, staff always encourage students to participate in the programme.



The ECTS system applied in European Universities does not permit student exchanges with other Institutions outside the European Union, nor does the high cost of such exchanges.

Since the attendance of the courses is not compulsory, courses start with over 100 students and at the end of the course only about 50 students attend.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	<b>X</b>
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends that more professors use mid-term exams as a means of constant evaluation for compulsory courses during the First Cycle of Studies. The Department must also consider the possibility of an additional course on critical thinking and writing skills for students with specific learning needs.

The annual internal evaluation takes into account the questionnaire submitted to students in order to evaluate the quality of courses and the profile of the staff. Since the number of students participating in the questionnaire is very low, the Department has decided to reduce the extension of the questionnaire hoping that more students shall participate in the evaluation.

Please provide your recommendations with regard to issues that need to be addressed, as appropriate.

## Principle 5: Teaching Staff

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.**

*The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:*

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching and research;*
- *offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff;*
- *encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
- *encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;*
- *promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit;*
- *follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The Department is blessed to have a group of high quality, committed faculty members and special teaching staff (ΕΔΙΠ). They maintain high standards in their teaching and research duties. The academic staff comprises 22 members (1 tenured lecturer, 12 Assistant Professors (9 tenured and 3 on tenure track), 3 Associate Professors and 6 Professors) as listed in the documentation provided by the department.

The faculty are all active in research publishing and presenting their work in appropriate venues. Additionally, the faculty are participating in significant research programmes and networks (currently more than 10). The faculty have been appointed and promoted through the ranks following the established Greek framework (N.4009/2011, N.4386/2016, N.4405/2016, N.4452/2017, N.4485/2017, N.4521/2018 as well as Φ.122.1/6/14241/Ζ2/27.01.2017 Υ.Α.(ΦΕΚ Β' 225) and is taking place on the information system found at [www.apella.minedu.gov.gr](http://www.apella.minedu.gov.gr). There is a tenure & promotion committee that includes members from other universities and follows a rigorous evaluation of the research and teaching credentials of the faculty under consideration. These rather complex rules are common to all Greek Universities. The department has set up and follows transparent processes for the recruitment of qualified faculty. Special emphasis is given in highlighting the importance of teaching and research.

The faculty have the opportunity for a sabbatical, or a leave to teach at other institutions via Erasmus+. Such activities promote faculty mobility and could be used to introduce improvements in the course delivery. Currently, Erasmus and sabbatical leaves are the only means for teaching staff mobility. It is worth noting that the department is utilizing an algorithm

developed by one of its members to fairly allocate sabbatical leaves. The department offers one semester of sabbatical leave every three years.

The research activity of the academic staff is clearly one of the strengths of the department, as evident by the number of publications in high-quality journals and reputable conferences. We did observe a significant effort of the teaching faculty to bring quality research into the undergraduate classrooms. Students are getting involved and participating in research projects. Students can be exposed to research activities through their final year theses. The EEAP was able to substantiate some evidence of research-informed teaching in other courses. Most notable examples include the elective courses “Gender and Sex in Premodern Europe,” “Hospitality and Cultural Differentiation”, “Public History”, “Kinship, Religion and Reproduction” and “The Anthropology of Birth and Death”.

The teaching workload seems reasonable and staff can be engaged in research and other personal development activities. It is important to note that students unanimously praised faculty for their consistent presence and availability either online or in their offices every day of the week. Teaching staff are assessed by students through the course surveys. However, they are not offered the opportunity for self-assessment or peer assessment.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching Staff	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Develop a strategy and a programme for professional development, properly communicated to academic staff, including training to pedagogical theories and approaches in teaching and learning in higher education.

Ensure that more (aside from the fourth year’s theses) research-informed teaching is delivered in undergraduate courses beyond the final year thesis.

Following the example of allocation of sabbaticals, the establishment of a transparent workload model that considers and balances teaching, administration, and research activities across the academic staff in the department might be very helpful.

The department is encouraged to establish frequent (once a year) self-assessment procedures for its faculty. This could be facilitated by the creation of a common questionnaire (Faculty Activity Report) for all faculty where they will be asked to report their teaching/research/service achievements and/or participation in the current academic year. This will help the faculty to prepare their tenure and/or promotion dossiers and provide them and any external/internal evaluation committee to glance over their achievements in a particular year or set of years.

The Department might also consider rewarding teaching and/or research excellence, after establishing clear and transparent relevant criteria. This could be in the form of an “Excellence in Teaching/Research/Service award”.

## Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND– PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND –ON THE OTHER HAND– FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).**

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*

*In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The infrastructure of the Faculty is exemplary. There are large classrooms, workshops, library, boarding facilities. Despite the limitations of the current economic crisis along with the structural deficiencies of the Higher Education System in Greece, professors and administrative staff strive to provide students with the necessary conditions to successfully complete their studies.

Due to the peripheral location of the University of the Aegean (there are campuses on six islands) communication was key for the efficient functioning of services. Therefore, one of its main objectives was a strong electronic infrastructure to improve communication between different facilities and coordinate academic activities. Despite the limited funds, technology resources have not been affected. Boarding rooms are well equipped with computers, electronic resources, main academic journal databases and the acquisition of bibliographic material is a main priority in the Department. Therefore, a strong emphasis on information technology has enabled the efficient teaching and learning activities especially since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic which has rendered the online teaching compulsory on the eClass platform. Admittedly it has been a challenge for professors and students alike but it has been a success so far: there is a direct relationship compared to classes of over 100 students, there has been an increase in attendance and a greater use of the data bases. The Department strictly adheres to the University Protocol as far as Covid-19 healthy measures are concerned, for example for courses where over 50 students are enrolled, courses are taught online.

The Secretarial is all digitized (classweb) in a large database which contains all information which facilitates the workload of the Administrative Staff. Students make all their applications for a student ID, boarding, the cafeteria, and other services online.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

Both academic and administrative staff are commended for their commitment to academic excellence.

The Panel observed some different opinions, which is to be expected, as regards online courses. Some students and professors prefer courses in the classroom whereas others online. In general, both enrolled students and graduates are very content with the quality of the courses, the profile of professors and the infrastructure and support they receive throughout the programme. Differences are also expressed in opinions regarding the access to the Department; some students argue that buses do not run on a regular schedule and have complained about it.

Another means of support could have been the “Association of Students” (Φοιτητικός Σύλλογος) which is, however, divisive on political grounds. Therefore, more students appeal to professors or σύμβουλοι for any issues concerning their academic and personal life.

## Principle 7: Information Management

**INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.**

*Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students as well as to the academic community.*

*Reliable data is essential for accurate information and for decision making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.*

*The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:*

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

*A number of methods may be used for collecting information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The EEAP members were impressed by these efforts, as well as the efforts of Ms Fani Mouchti with Information Technology support for both faculty and students. In addition, the panel was impressed with the support offered by the two administrative assistants, Ms Sophia Koutsafti, and Ms Hrisanthi Hatzinikolaou, who help students navigate through the University's bureaucracy and records. Over the years, they have been able to establish an information system that is well organized and managed properly to aid students and teaching staff. In addition, they form a solid bridge between the department, the administration and the Ministry of Education at-large.

The EEAP has discussed extensively in other sections of the report the student population profile, their progression, success and drop-out rates, as well as their satisfaction with the program. Overall, students expressed their enthusiasm with the department and were pleased with the way learning resources were widely available, as well as the close ties they developed with the faculty. They praised their teachers both for their teaching performance and for their willingness to follow their progress on an individual level and guide them for their future career path.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information Management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The Panel found the information management to be fully compliant. We have no recommendations at this moment.



## Principle 8: Public Information

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.**

*Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.*

*Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.*

### Study Programme Compliance

Through its website, the Department provides pertinent information about its academic and educational activities in a direct and accessible way. Guides are regularly published and are available on line. Additional course-specific information is provided by the e-class platform. By email the faculty and the Secretariat can offer information on issues pertaining to the curriculum, student queries and related activities. The website is regularly maintained and updated. The EEAP explored the publicly available information at the website as well as sample material from coursework made available by the Department to the panel members in a specific webpage constructed specifically for this purpose. The EEAP expresses its satisfaction and gratitude for the Department's willingness to offer such detailed presentation.

Intended learning outcomes and professional qualifications are well-publicized at the department's website. The faculty's professional qualifications are based upon national legislation and are uniform for all Greek higher education institutions. With respect to the History and Social Anthropology major, it should be noted that since it is not a professional degree, it is obvious that the role of particular professional qualifications is limited. The teaching, learning and assessment procedures used in the Department are all explicitly presented at the website; and the information is accurate and appears to be regularly updated.

In its online meeting with the administrative staff, the EEAP further requested and was kindly offered an online tour of the e-class & classweb platforms, which are partly encrypted and therefore not publicly available. The EEAP appreciates the OMEA's willingness to accommodate our request. The e-class and classweb websites perform important roles in terms of the digital resources used for the operation of the Social Anthropology and History major. The e-class platform directly supports the educational process by providing detailed course content, teaching and learning material and related bibliography, useful links and valid digital open access manuals. The classweb platform records registered students and their performance, providing students with personalized information about their education (grades, grading history, course statements, etc.) while reducing bureaucratic procedures. Also, other media aid teaching and foster social networking (i.e., Facebook). Faculty engagement & departmental outreach includes a range of various activities & media, including: YouTube; TV and radio programs; conferences; articles in electronic media and newspapers; panel participation, etc.

Information pertaining to the graduates' unemployment rate does not appear to be publicly (or even privately) available. Similarly, information about the graduates' employment opportunities does not appear to be available. The EEAP met with alumni who offered a partial glimpse into the various career paths pursued by individuals – albeit there is no way to ascertain whether this group is representative of the majority of alumni. The alumni appear particularly enthusiastic about their experience at the Department. However, very little tangible information about specific institutionalized connections between their degree and their career path was mentioned – in most cases, such connections were discovered & developed overtime through personal initiatives.

### Panel Judgement

<b>Principle 8: Public Information</b>	
Fully compliant	<b>X</b>
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that the Department has to explore more directly & forcefully the issue of employment options made available to its future alumni. In particular, the development of an institutional strategy relating its future graduates to the labor market should be considered.

## Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.*

*The above comprise the evaluation of:*

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

*Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.*

### Study Programme Compliance

The self-assessment procedure of the study programme took place for the first time in 2011 and since that year, it takes place annually. The department collects, records, and submits the results to the Institution's QAU/MODIP. The results of the self-assessment are disseminated within the academic unit. It was evident that all stakeholders of the programme, including academic, and administrative, undergraduate, and graduate students are actively engaged in the current accreditation review. It has been exhibited both in the OMEA meeting and the meetings with all stakeholders that they are fully aware of the importance of the reviewing process and the positive effects that can derive from it.

Department faculty and staff are aware of the importance of the study programme accreditation and their role as key Quality Assurance providers to the continuous improvement of the Department. The current accreditation follows the Greek law (3374/2005) and has benefited from the excellent function and effective interaction between various agencies and committees including OMEA and MODIP. The Department's internal evaluation committee (OMEA) has a continuous collaboration with MODIP, the quality-assurance unit of the University of the Aegean.

The Department is deemed to be fully compliant in this area. It has created review procedures for the evaluation and improvement of the content of studies with integration of latest research in the discipline, changing society needs, effectiveness of students' assessment, students' expectations, needs, workload progression, learning environment, support services.

## Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

## Panel Recommendations

The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) would also recommend to the department to make every effort to increase the percentage of student participation in the course evaluation process every semester. The current percentage (4%) is not satisfactory, an increase would give the department a more informative tool to monitor the quality of the courses.

It is also strongly suggested to continue keeping both internal and external stakeholder groups fully engaged with this process.

The use of multiple ways for the assessment of students. Especially, for the YPOXREOTIKA (compulsory courses), that have an audience of more than 100 students, it was mentioned (by students), that it is helpful for them to be assessed by two proodoi throughout the semester instead of one final exam at the end. Multiple ways of students' assessments (e.g. weekly written assignments) are being implemented in the upper level seminars and frontistiriaka courses.

## Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

**PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.**

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*

*Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*

*The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

### Study Programme Compliance

In the past, the Department had undergone an External Evaluation in November of 2013. The outcome of the first review was very positive, and only a few recommendations were made by the External Evaluation Committee. In the Proposal of Academic Accreditation that the Department submitted to the EEAP it is stated that these recommendations were taken into a serious consideration. Some of the problems arising from external factors could not be sorted out as they were related mostly to the economic crisis that affected Greece in the past years.

Several of the recommendations made by the External Evaluation Committee (External Evaluation Report document) have been considered and have since been incorporated into the programme as documented in the Evaluation Report and Action Plan. Most notable examples are the inclusion of non-Greek culture focused courses, the presence of faculty with research interests in Africa's ethnography, etc.

The EEAP can attest that the Department's academic staff are aware of the importance of the external reviews and their contribution to cementing the Department's national and international fame.

### Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

### **Panel Recommendations**

The EEAP would recommend the creation of a 5-year strategic plan. A strategic planning committee that would investigate where the Department wants to be 5 and 10 years down the road is recommended.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

There is an abundance of strengths and a few weaknesses associated with this undergraduate program, the former heavily outweighing the latter. The EEAP was impressed how the department, despite the bureaucratic constraints and the low student turn over, has established a 'student-centered' (φοιτητοκεντρική) approach and follow each student closely in their educational process. They have available technological innovative teaching methods and they go beyond their regular duties to make sure the students learn how to read the literature, how to express their views orally and in writing, and, in general, how to succeed in their studies.

They supervise their practical training and encourage them to participate in research projects, thus preparing them for entering the job market, or continuing on for post-graduate and doctoral studies. The weaknesses of the program mainly stem from structural/bureaucratic and socio-economic constraints that the faculty cannot solve. The University of the Aegean is located in the island of Lesbos, and many Greek students prefer to study in major mainland universities, and they transfer there if they can. Those who cannot transfer stay, but are not necessarily 'active,' many not being able to cover the cost of room and board given the economic crisis. The EEAP firmly believes that once these weaknesses are solved at-large, all students will be able to benefit from the credited merits of this department.

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

Academic profile with a balance between Social Anthropology and History; active faculty research with student involvement; research-informed teaching; student-centered pedagogical methods; infrastructure; management of information technology.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

Low student turnover and attendance; transfer, drop out and lagging students; Euro-centric curriculum; weak participation of student participation in evaluation of courses and teachers; lack of long-term strategic planning.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

Five-year strategic plan; reward excellency for both students and teachers; better connection of department graduates to the labor market in Greece and abroad; introduce new courses of non-Eurocentric content.

### **IV. Summary & Overall Assessment**

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: 4

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: None

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: None

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	



## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname	Signature
1. <b>Professor Anastasia Karakasidou</b> (Chair), Wellesley College, U.S.A.	
2. <b>Maria Antoniou</b> , Pace University, U.S.A.	
3. <b>Victor Roudometof</b> , University of Cyprus, Cyprus	
4. <b>Agapi Filini</b> , El Colegio de Michoacán, México	