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### **Response to External Evaluation Report for the PhD program in Sociology**

21-3-2019

Dear Mr Aletraris,

Thank you for sending the external evaluation report for the PhD program in Sociology. We are thankful for the thoughtful and helpful remarks of the External Evaluation Committee. We are also thankful for your careful and diligent implementation of the evaluation procedure.

We gladly note the Committee's rankings of the various indicators as all Satisfactory or better, with the vast majority as Excellent, and the view that: "The PhD personnel is very adequate and dedicated to accomplishing the PhD project. We are satisfied with the advising and teaching requirements for the program."

Herebelow please find our responses to *all* comments included in the Report:

1) 'There are no courses. Admission is conditioned on a Master's Exam. Procedure to completing the PhD dissertation is condition on passing a comprehensive exam. The PhD personnel is very adequate and dedicated to accomplishing the PhD project. We are satisfied with the advising and teaching requirements for the program.'

Response: We are encouraged by these comments.

2) "As mentioned in part one of our comments, the PhD program is based on a successful completion of Master courses and passing a comprehensive exam. Thus there is not a required program of studies. The management of the PhD program is very good. The international dimension of the program is a pertinent part of the development of the PhD scholar. The students currently in the program are international students. They participate in international conferences and encouraged to publish their results in scientific journals while completing their PhD. In addition, the program has a one-day PhD conference every term. The conference is well attended by faculty and other PhD students and there is much discussion and feedback. The one-day conference is highly appreciated by the current students. Students are well aware of their future job market prospects and the advantages of completing a post-doctoral appointment. They are also involved in co-publication of scientific works together with senior faculty. These endeavors will obviously help them in connections with their future labor market employment as well as their

further contribution to society.”

Response: As above.

3) “The PhD does not have many students but the students that apply and are accepted as PhD candidates work very closely with the on-going research in sociology. As such, they become very involved in producing research in well-established fields yet have the possibilities to develop their own research questions and become independent scholars. The sociology faculty has done a very good job at promoting synergies of on-going research the production of new PhDs.”

Response: As above.

4) “The faculty and administration is well-aware of the support necessary, both financially and academically, that must be in place for a successful doctoral program. They have made sure that there is enough financial incentives for students to attend international conferences and to publish own and co-authored work. However, allowing for a joint office space for PhD students would be a strong contribution for development of a strong doctoral community for undergraduate, post graduate and faculty.”

Response: We have henceforth allocated (Department Meeting 3/2019) a common room (OEΔ01/B124) which PhD students can use as joint office space.

5) ‘At the present time, the doctoral program is running successfully but this is successful because of the low number of students. The number of students is dependent on the research interests of the senior faculty that in turn become advisors to incoming doctoral students. The doctoral students will be working in ongoing or related research projects. In order for the program to develop, the faculty needs to attract high quality students working in a variety of sociological areas. This can be obtained if the faculty itself established a Masters program in sociology that would be a corridor into their PhD program. The internationalization of such a program would enable the University to better position themselves for both international recognition and competency in competing for international funding. Starting and promoting an international Masters program in sociology also involves a commitment of the faculty beyond their individual research areas. Given the competency of the faculty as we have seen it through examining their own research endeavors, we strongly believe that an extension to an international Masters program in sociology is essential to the further development of their doctoral program.

As it is now, there is a problem of recruiting promising doctoral students as recruitment is totally dependent on the scientific reputations of a few individuals.’

Response: There is already interest in the Department regarding a Sociology-orientated MA. The Departmental Evaluation foresees the possibility of an additional MA as a Medium-

Term goal of the department (Department Meeting 3/2019), subject to availability of necessary resources (as this is not possible now with currently available teaching resources).

6) 'As we have pointed out above, we are positive to what the doctoral program has accomplished. However, there are challenges to future development. In terms of "good practices," we especially want to mention the one-day PhD conferences as well as the introduction to publishing in high standard peer-reviewed journals that is given to doctoral students. A further "good practice" is the dedication the senior staff has demonstrated towards their students through their constant feed back and general inclusive treatment of doctoral students into the academic community.

The challenges facing the doctoral program is recruiting of high-quality students, initiating an international masters program to help alleviate this problem and extending the competency of the faculty to a broader view of sociology. We believe that a challenge to the doctoral program is also increasing the faculty's competitive international position.'

Response: Regarding the recruitment of high-quality students, we have already instituted an internationally-advertised stipendiary scholarship for the PhD in Sociology. Regarding the creation of an MA in sociology, see our response to 4 above. Regarding extending the competency of the faculty, we have currently one position open for Sociology and one additional which could go to Sociology (this is a strategic position in Peace and Conflict Studies or Global Crises which could potentially lead to the recruitment of a sociologist, e.g. dealing with economic- or migration- or environment-related crises). These will substantially enhance the competency of the faculty and broaden the range of topics of admissible PhD students.

Sincerely,

Yiannis Papadakis

Professor,

PhD Sociology Program Coordinator