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ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

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External Evaluation Committee
The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Architecture of the Aristotle University consisted of the following five (5) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. **Dr. Chris Yessios** (Coordinator)
   The Ohio University, Knowlton School of Architecture, USA

2. **Prof. Theoharis David, FAIA**
   Pratt Institute, School of Architecture, USA

3. **Dr. Petros Petsimeris**
   UFR de Geographie-Universite Paris I Pantheon- Sorbonne, Institute de Geographie, Paris, France

4. **Dr. Kostas Terzidis**
   Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, USA

5. **Dr. Athanassios Economou**
   College of Architecture , Georgia Insitute of Technology, USA

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

The external evaluation committee (henceforth 'the Committee') visited the Department of Architecture (henceforth 'the Department') of the Aristotle University (henceforth 'the University' or 'AUT') on the dates 25/2/2014 and 26/2/2014. It was greeted upon arrival (early evening 24/2/2014) by Assoc. Prof. Spiridonidis, and Assoc. Professor Voyatzaki.

In the two days of the visit the Committee met with the vice Rector of Academic Affairs and Personnel of the University (Pr. Lialou), with the Dean of the Polytechnic School (Pr. Katsampalos), with the Head of the Department of Architecture (Pr. Kalogerou) with the Internal Evaluation Committee, with members of the faculty, students of the pre-graduate, post-graduate and doctoral programmes and support staff of various capacities (administrative staff, technical support, etc).

It has to be noted that the Committee met considerable difficulties in reviewing the program presentation and inspecting various spaces and facilities of the Department because of the resistance of a small group of students that deliberately obstructed the visit. The major presentation of the program by the Chair and faculty had to be relocated to a building off campus (the building of the Technical Chamber of Greece) and relocated once again during the same day to the hotel where the Committee resided. Despite these obstacles the Committee was shown some of the rooms and facilities used for education, research, and administrative support, and was given a tour of an upcoming exhibition of diploma works by 5th year students. Major educational and research spaces including all studios, library, the post-graduate facilities were not visited by the Committee. Other than that, all discussions were constructive and informative.

Prior to the visit the Committee was provided in advance with the internal evaluation report written by the Department, a link to the website of the Department featuring information pertinent to the audit and electronic copies of the presentations were given. However the website was substantially changed a few days prior to the visit without notification, which made it difficult to review it sufficiently. The Committee also requested and received electronic copies and paper printouts from project work by students.

Overall, the Committee is satisfied with and commends the welcoming and cooperative attitude of the Department who made all pertinent resources available to the needs and purposes of the evaluation. The electronic documentation was well-executed and in line with good international practices.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

The internal evaluation report was reasonably complete. It was repeatedly communicated by the faculty to the Committee that their effort to put together this report was constructive and useful as it helped them to come to terms with the work they are doing. The Committee believes that the internal evaluation report served as a good starting point for self-evaluation and reflection. By general recognition the evaluation offer an opportunity for the Department to achieve important gains including a new website.

A. Curriculum

The AUT Department of Architecture offers a 5-year professional program and degree (to be referred to as the pre-graduate program), three post-graduate programs, soon to be increased to five, and a doctorate program. Each level is discussed separately below.

A1. Pre-graduate Curriculum

APPROACH

As an introductory note, the Committee feels that a historical review of the evolution of the curriculum of the Department of Architecture would be appropriate and helpful.

For the past 20 or so years, the curriculum was based on more or less traditional studios complemented by a huge number (close to 100) of elective courses. These resulted from the availability of a relatively large number of teaching personnel that was graciously hired by the Greek Government in the 80's. This presented the students with a great freedom of choice.

Due to the economic crisis of Greece in recent years, retiring faculty is not being replaced, resulting in a reduction of teaching personnel from about 77 to 43, during the period of 2007-2013. This resulted into a drastic reduction of the elective courses offered and also in the number of the available studio instructors. All this had a major effect on the overall curriculum of the Department, which is actually the curriculum offered currently and was presented to us in quite a bit of detail. This is a curriculum that appears to have resulted through evolutionary efforts aimed at fitting existing personnel to the instructional needs of the students.

Having recognized the deficiencies of the current curriculum, for the last four years, the Department has undertaken a major effort towards the design of a new curriculum. This effort is now almost completed and the Department's goal is to implement it in the next academic year (2014-15). The new curriculum, as presented by the Department, is attached to this report and its main points are discussed below. While the new curriculum has not been formally approved by the complete faculty assembly yet, it is the product of extensive teamwork, which involved nearly all the faculty of the Department.

Given all this, the Committee was faced with the dilemma of which curriculum it should evaluate. The old does not exist anymore, the current is in constant transition, and the proposed is just that, a proposal. We concluded that awareness of the old curriculum is useful in order to maintain a factual perspective, the current curriculum should be reviewed for judging the Department's ability to deliver a decent education to its students, even under unfavorable and challenging circumstances, and finally the proposed curriculum should be evaluated for its approach, relevance, promises, and potentialities.

GOALS

The goals of both the current and the proposed curriculum are to educate young architects capable of designing and constructing buildings and to do so in a pluralistic manner, meaning by allowing extensive freedoms in the ways students develop their designs rather then imposing predetermined concepts. The means by which they plan to achieve these goals, especially in the proposed curriculum is by developing a studio culture. This requires that each student is assigned his/her own drafting desk and is encouraged to maximize his/her presence at the studio. The Department expressed awareness of the additional developments that need to occur in order for the studio culture to flourish, namely, increased security, decreased vandalism, and improved facilities maintenance, including more frequent cleaning. An opinion was also expressed that, at a time of limited resources, the students themselves may have to pick up additional responsibilities, which becomes doable once the students become believers in the value of a studio culture.

One by-product of the process of developing a new curriculum is that the Department faculty deviated from a long-standing tradition of isolation and started working as groups. This mode is further promoted by the proposed curriculum itself as groups of courses are designed to support each other and especially the theoretical courses to interact with and feed knowledge into the studios. This group approach is also the way in which the curriculum will be revised in the future. The Department sees this as a continuous process that is ready to change and adjust as professional requirements in the real world and the needs of the students may change.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department is aware that implementation of the proposed curriculum will require some realignment of the current duties of the faculty and, because a large number of faculty was involved in the development of the proposal, they believe that there will be extensive if not full cooperation. This in spite of the democratic tradition of the Department according to which the President is unwilling to dictate to the faculty what to do, which would risk violating the faculty's academic freedoms. The Committee also believes that the Department will be successful in implementing the new curriculum as it recognizes how successful they have been with the current curriculum by making the necessary adjustments as needs presented themselves.

RESULTS

According to testimonies by students, overall, the Department has been doing a decent job in educating its students, especially during the last decade, in spite of challenging circumstances. However, improvements are highly desirable. One can only applaud the Department's ability to produce overachieving graduates, which proves that good students can always find a way to get a decent education even under unfavorable conditions. This becomes especially obvious when reviewing the admissions into foreign Universities that the Department's graduates have achieved. The list includes many highly reputed Universities in the USA and Europe. What is even more impressive is the sporadic yet persistent information that many are excelling in their graduate studies, a proof of how well they are prepared at the University.

The Committee is confident that all the ingredients are in place for the Department of Architecture in the University to continue producing highly satisfactory results, provided it makes the necessary adjustments that will address the challenges of the present times. However, a warning is necessary: It should not loose any more faculty, but rather should gain some faculty back according to the 1:5 formula that the Ministry of Education has established. There are quite a few contemporary areas, namely, energy efficiency, sustainability, digital design, computer driven manufacturing that impose special personnel requirements on today's Architectural Departments.

A2. Post-graduate Curriculum

There are currently three established post-graduate programs and two more have been approved by the General Assembly of the Department and the Senate of AUT and will be implemented as soon as they are ratified by the Ministry of Education. The three established programs are in Conservation and Restoration, Landscape Architecture, and Museology. The new programs will be in Advanced Design: Innovation and Transdisciplinarity in Architectural Design and Environmental Architectural Design. They are intended to support more general educational areas, in contrast to the highly specialized existing programs, and to offer opportunities to high quality graduates to continue their studies at the Aristotle School, rather than pursuing post-graduate studies abroad.

The Committee's impression about the three existing post-graduate programs is very positive. We had the opportunity to meet with students of the Museology program who used expressions such as "the program was a major influence in our professional career." It seems that the success of these programs may be presenting opportunities for becoming

more broadly recognized centers of excellence for the benefit of the whole Department of Architecture.

To be more specific, the post-graduate programs are very well structured, they have clear educational goals, and they have been very successful in fulfilling these goals. In addition, they have reached a significant level of publicity and recognition. They are achieving all these through research projects, rather extensive publications, and through national and international conferences and workshops they both organize and attend. In general, all three programs appeared to be very active in what they are doing and their personnel seems to be undertaking tasks that go beyond their call of duty. It may well be that one or more of the programs is/are more active and successful than the others, but the Committee did not have an opportunity to judge, given the time limitations they had.

It should be noted that all post-graduate programs have been specifically approved and established by the Ministry of Education and they are quite independent from the Department, while they draw teaching personnel from the Department. They also have the liberty and can admit students with non-architectural degrees. This autonomy appears to have both positive and negative effects on the missions of the Department of Architecture and the Committee felt that the post-graduate programs should be doing more in supporting the missions of the Department of Architecture.

Regarding the new post-graduate programs under development, the Committee applauds the Department's recognition that there are more areas related to Architecture that deserve special concentration and applauds the establishment of the two additional programs. At the same time, it is hesitant to recommend establishment of more than the current five post-graduate programs, as too many may over-burden the resources of the Department, especially given the recent reductions in teaching personnel. It should be mentioned that the Department already has additional areas of concentration that reflect the interests of certain instructors that are achieving significant levels of excellence but do not enjoy the level of recognition that the more autonomous post-graduate programs do. The Committee feels that more should be done to recognize the work of those teachers and also the distinguished professional work that some of the teaching personnel is engaged in.

A3. Doctorate Program

The Department of Architecture is reporting that it currently has 134 doctorate students. Given that the faculty numbers about 40, which includes freshmen faculty that normally would not qualify to supervise dissertation work, the number of doctorate students appears excessive, which raises concerns about the quality that results from the Doctorate Program.

It should be noted that the typical Greek Doctoral Program differs from the typical PhD programs offered overseas (USA, Canada) in that it does not include any formal class-work but it follows the format of an independent study under the guidance of one or more advisors. This format is comparable to doctoral programs offered in Europe. This format may also explain how the Department manages to handle such impressive numbers of doctorate students. However, at the Aristotle Department of Architecture, doctorate students whose area of concentration coincides with one of the post-graduate programs, have the option to take the curriculum of the post-graduate program and then proceed with their independent research. It was mentioned that quite a few do just that.

The Committee was not provided sufficient information to be able to apply judgment as to the quality of the Doctorate Program. A review of the list of titles of recent dissertations allows the impression that there is not much emphasis on the requirement of originality, as would have been the case abroad. But, again, the Committee does not have sufficient information to reach this conclusion with certainty. In any case, the Committee applauds the interest exhibited by the students in furthering their education. However, we also have to recognize that the large number of doctorate students may also be influenced by the current economic situation in Greece, where jobs are scarce.

B. Teaching

APPROACH

Teaching methods include project-based teaching and lecture-based teaching. The sequence of studios, the core course sequence of the undergraduate curriculum, relies exclusively on a model of "project-based teaching". A good number of courses appear to rely on both methods (lecture-studio) and few courses appear to rely exclusively on lecture-based teaching.

Based on the statistical data sheet given to the Committee (dated January 2014), the general faculty includes 38 tenure and tenure-track faculty. The pre-rgraduate students are estimated to 1,236 of whom 705 are within the expected time of graduation (5 years) and 542 are beyond this limit. The post-graduate students are 60 and doctoral students are 134. The ratio of faculty to all students is about 1:30, which is not an acceptable teaching standard.

The teacher-student collaboration is strong in the project-based learning methods of the department and in particular within the studio course sequence. These courses require a close collaboration between the individual student or team of students with the faculty who supervises and guides the work. The ratio of instructor to student cannot be calculated with confidence because of the large number of students that have been already in the school for more than 5 years. Moreover, courses are distributed among seminars, lectures, and studios with varying numbers of students per class, not to mention the fact that in most studios the students form teams of twos and threes.

The numbers of courses that faculty teach at both the pre-graduate and post-graduate levels appear difficult to calculate with confidence and vary among the faculty that teach studio and those that do not. The Committee formed the general impression that the studio faculty are enthusiastic about their teaching and are successfully transmitting their enthusiasm to students.

The degree that information technologies are used for the electronic management, storage and presentation of teaching materials, as well as for support of the teaching within the classrooms and labs is unclear. Conversation with students revealed an enthusiastic staff applying digital techniques and concepts but a lack of adequate hardware resources (i.e. laser cutter, woodshop), software and infrastructure.

The examination system relies primarily on design reviews during and at the end of the semester and includes as well an array of diverse methods such as exams, tests, and so forth. The use of external reviewers at studio projects while required for the thesis projects is not always present in the other studios

IMPLEMENTATION

Within the pluralistic model of curriculum, students are exposed to a plethora of courses. From a teacher's point of view, such plethora requires diverse interests and constant updates to keep up with the changing world of architectural discourse. The Committee finds that, while the staff is enthusiastic, dedicated, and knowledgeable, the reality of the budgetary cuts has significantly affected the number of courses to be offered. The department was therefore forced to merge, delete, or optimize courses in order to keep up with the ever-reducing budget. Of course, this situation has placed a tremendous pressure on the faculty and had an ontological effect on the "pluralistic" identity of the school. Given the current staff and budget, the Department of Architecture can no longer be a pluralistic department in the same way it was in the past. The proposed new program of studies attempts to resolve this problem by introducing a new, optimized, and restructured program of studies that allows all faculty to reduce their workload while continuing to offer courses in their own areas of expertise. The Committee supports the new program and feels that it will

contribute to a unified, optimized, directed, and identifiable architectural study program.

The proposed new studies program will hopefully improve the link between research and teaching. With a reduced teaching load and more pressure to raise funds, the faculty can device new techniques, practices or theories that will infuse into their course, further enhancing their research efforts. However, the need for research is more essential for the young tenure track faculty who need this research for promotion and are more open to new ideas. Therefore, more release time and support should be given to this group of faculty.

The centrally available system for student evaluation of courses and teaching performance, established by AUT, was briefly presented. The impression of the Committee was that the system has not worked yet satisfactorily for the Department of Architecture and that student evaluations were scarcely returned. The Department must devise a strategy and encourage the student review process. Given that most students have access to the Internet and the evaluation system is online, it is not clear why it is not yet used effectively. It may well be that the questionnaires are too long and need redesign, as a few students suggested.

RESULTS

The Committee finds that there is a highly diverse, energetic, and innovative faculty among whom a strong sense of community is emerging. The faculty is respected by students and mentioned as a primary reason by students for enrollment in the programs of the Department. Especially at the pre-graduate level, students have been impressed by the diverse knowledge of the faculty as well as their willingness to advise them on academic, research of practical matters despite the lack of a formal academic advising system.

The breadth, range, and plurality of courses offered is appropriately and successfully carried out by the faculty. These qualities have been points of strength and have enhanced the identity for the department in the past. However, the recent budgetary cuts in faculty numbers have made such plurality unattainable and therefore a new teaching philosophy has been sought by the department. The proposed new teaching plan incorporates three major dimensions: a studio culture, technological innovation in teaching, and a strong post-graduate program. The Committee encourages these efforts and hopes that they will also lead to collaboration, interaction, and solidarity amongst the faculty, as well as responsibility, dexterity, and expertise amongst the students.

Specifically, the new teaching plan encompasses all existing faculty expertise into categories that infuse, inform, and contribute to the studio which becomes the reference point of teaching. Since almost all students have their own laptop, computational technology is to be incorporated into the studio and into the courses in a supportive physical manner (i.e. peripheral hardware and software) and in a critical and intellectual tool that affects, extends, and often challenges the design process. The introduction of two new post-graduate programs in Advanced Design: Innovation and Transdisciplinarity in Architectural Design and Environmental Architectural Design will hopefully be used as outlets for design and environmental methodologies beyond the pre-graduate level, enforce an identity through advanced research, allow interaction with other post-graduate programs internationally, and most importantly, provide an opportunity for the best undergraduate students to continue their studies in Greece. In addition, the two new post-graduate programs appear to address the problem of design in a broad, inclusive, and generalizable manner that may attract students from seemingly unrelated disciplines to participate, cross pollinate, and potentially redefine architectural design in a true pluralistic manner.

The Committee noticed that, while the department offers a 5-year curriculum and diploma, the average time for graduation is about 8 years! This is due not only to the students inability to manage their time but also to the lack of formal academic guidance and the load of work in the last year's thesis project. Such a delay poses a financial burden on the Department. More faculty members are required to take care of delayed students and more time is required for teaching that is taken away from other activities such as research. The Committee agrees that the new study program will improve this situation and allow

instructors to focus on fewer courses and significantly more students to graduate on time.

IMPROVEMENT

Currently, due to the large number of students, studio projects are worked on by teams of students, which makes it hard for the studio instructor to assess each team member's contribution to the project. Moreover, the final project is rarely presented and criticized by external reviewers, which limits the learning experience of the students. This issue can hopefully be addressed by the proposed new curriculum so that learning, fairness, honesty, and collaboration can be improved. There must also be a clear strategy in the new program intended to address the physical and intellectual demands of a studio-based curriculum. That is, the reliance on extensive use of teamwork for the completion of studio projects should be reduced and more autonomous work should be encoutaged, thus placing more emphasis on personal performance, responsibility, and learning.

The department must undertake a careful management analysis of space requirements addressing the space, security, and hygiene conditions. Courses should be carefully planned to better distribute increasingly limited budget support funds and to reduce the stress on faculty expected to provide instructional attention to a large number of students over an extended number of studio hours.

While the use of computation is encouraged not only as a tool but also as a conceptual methodology in design, traditional manual methods (i.e. model making, drawing, sketching, etc.) should be incorporated as well. The committee believes that the co-existence of both methods throughout the entire 5-year period of study is essential for the students not only as a means of dexterity, adeptness, and capability but also aptitude, criticality, and experimentation.

Post-graduate courses should rightfully and equally outreach to other departments within the Polytechnic School and other schools within the University to provide support and integration of the existing courses as well as educate others on architectural matters.

The Committee wishes to express concern over the retirement or loss of teaching positions. It is our opinion that this goes beyond the limits of bearable budget reductions and it undermines the department's academic performance and integrity.

C. Research

APPROACH

According to the internal evaluation report provided by the Department, research appears to be one of the two main goals of the Department of Architecture. These goals are: (a) to educate its pre-graduate and post-graduate students and (b) to produce original scientific knowledge and innovative research. The Committee had difficulties recognizing the equal realization of these goals.

IMPLEMENTATION

Recently, the Department has undergone a restructuring of its research organization through mergers and the renaming of laboratories. This has resulted in a rather confusing picture as to how the structure of research is defined and how the research is implemented. Based on the information provided to the Committee, it seems that there is a discrepancy in the laboratories over the terms of resources and their visibility. The space allocated to the various laboratories is adequate but the equipment, research infrastructure, and human resources should be strengthened even further to ensure a vital and normal functioning for further development of the research.

The Committee recommends a more stable environment of the research organization in terms of institutionalization, staff and resources for its integration in order to achieve their mission. It is also important for the staff members to explore the possibility of fewer units, better structured, more visible and capable to compete internationally.

RESULTS

It appears that the research is performed mainly on an individual initiative and that a number of doctorate students are involved in the research projects. The Department, however, lacks a body of support that will enable members to compete nationally and internationally as well as a budget for developing research proposals. In addition, the reduction of the staff will have a negative effect on the time slots that may be available for research.

The Committee feels that the information it was provided was rather incomplete relative to the list of undertaken projects, their budgets, their areas of investigation, and their outputs.

With respect to doctorate research, it will be important to organize a substantive program of theoretical and methodological seminars. Such seminars may function within individual research units or they may aim at crosspollination among a number of research units. This will be important for building collaborations that could be beneficial to the research units and to the doctorate students. Thus the students will be feeling less isolated and more involved in the overall research dynamics. It is advisable that the doctorate students themselves are heavily involved in the decision process of organizing these seminars.

PUBLICATIONS

Concerning the publications related to research, the Committee reviewed the list of publications of the Department of Architecture produced between 2007-2013. The quantity of the publications is impressive and diverse in terms of publication venues. The publications are mainly in four languages Greek, English, French and Spanish produced individually or jointly. The whole production is evenly distributed during the seven years, yet at the individual and sub-discipline levels the distribution of topics is uneven and asymmetrical. The majority of the publications are in the form of books, chapters in edited collective books,

some of them in international publishing houses and papers and proceedings of international conferences and seminars (Greece, Italy, Spain, Poland etc). The Committee did not have the opportunity to examine individually the content and the quality of the majority of them. However, it observed that there is a rather limited number of peer-reviewed publications. This raises a concern, as peer-reviewed publications typically represent a higher level of quality and when they exist they contribute to the valorization of the research produced in a Department. They also generate visibility and promote a Department through the dissemination of significant research results.

It should also be noted that the list of "publications" provided is a very mixed bag, including visual arts projects and architectural designs. While the Committee applauds the inclusion of these, as by today's international academic standards they are considered equivalent to research projects and are counted equally in promotion/tenure reviews, the presentation would have been much more effective and understandable if it were structured in categories containing the different types of publications and creative work.

A significant number of authors are now retired and in the coming years more will retire. It will be important for the Department to provide new research opportunities and to allow time for its faculty to undertake research and to produce publications.

Currently, the typical teaching load is immense, which makes it hard for the faculty to allocate time to research. This is especially true for junior faculty and becomes an impediment to their promotion, as it limits their ability to produce research and publications. The department needs to address this issue by providing some release time especially to those faculty members that have the least number of publications, even though they have already demonstrated their ability to produce significant research

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

The Department did not express concerns regarding the overall level and quality of services provided to the members of the academic community. The Department does not have a policy in place to increase student presence in the school. Furthermore it appears that the insufficient upkeep and maintenance of the physical building is demoralizing for students and faculty alike. However the new curriculum that the department in currently working on radically reconsiders the participation of students in the life of the school by proposing studio as the heart of the educational experience.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department support staff is divided into an academic and an economic section.

It appears that students are counselled ad hoc by individual faculty. Organised coaching/counselling on academic matters or other issues (i.e. personal) is not in place. It appears that de facto the vast majority of the students own their own laptops and the infrastructure should be provided by the department. The infrastructure should include a variety of support hardware (printers, plotters, rapid prototyping machines etc) and free internet access. Plans for acquisition of a laser cutter are in place. Two existing computer labs will be taken offline in the near future because their maintenance is costly and they are not necessary any more, as they were in the past.

The Committee was not able to visit and assess the labs, the studios, the library and most of the other spaces, because of the obstruction by a group of students that opposes the external evaluation process.

RESULTS

It seems that the administrative services are adequate for the Department. The Committee visited two of the administrative sections of the pre-graduate program of the Department and had a favourable impression of the amount of space allocated to the offices, the student work exhibited and so forth.

IMPROVEMENTS

The Department has identified ways and methods to improve the services. More specifically, the Department considers a reshuffling of its spaces to provide five studio spaces, each corresponding to a different year of the student body – a policy in line with international practices. The Committee agrees with this vision and encourages the Department to seriously undertake all possible scenarios to make this happen. Additionally, the Department considers acquiring one or more laser cutters to complement its current digital fabrication infrastructure. The Committee applauds this plan, as it will further accommodate and support the students' laptops and is in line with international practices.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

The Department's initiatives include organisation of social events, invited lectures by famous

and avant-guard architectural practitioners and theorists, educational excursions in Greece and abroad, local art exhibitions and other activities. All are effective and vibrant.

The Department has not set a practical training process or other formal ties with local architectural or design firms to network its students. Students asked to have access to and a better connection with architectural practice, through a practical training process.

E. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the Committee

The main conclusions and recommendations of the Committee, explained in detail within the relevant fields in this report, are summarised below. The summary consists of negative and positive points for all categories identified in the report. It has to be noted though once again that the work of the Committee was impeded by a protesting small group of students who objected to any evaluation process and refused to engage in any dialogue with the members of the Committee. This report concludes with an Epilogue, which is an overview of our holistic concept of what architectural education ought to be.

E1. Conclusions

I. Points of concern / weaknesses

General
1. It appears that the relationship of the department of Architecture to the Polytechnic School is unstable, questionable, and the visions appear to be incompatible.
2. Despite the attempted interruptions and interference by a small group of students, the Committee managed to cover some but not all the areas of the school.

Curriculum/Teaching
1. The extent to which the three post-graduate programs enrich the entire curriculum of the Department is questionable. In other words, the post-graduate programs appear to be somewhat insular and inaccessible to the rest of the undergraduate students and faculty.
2. There is no strong evidence of computing being used as a design tool, rather than just for rendering or drafting.
3. The investigation in the design studio of complex large-scale structures seems to be limited.
4. The students are not sufficiently aware of the new curriculum proposal.
5. The students referred to the curriculum as "moving sand" and stated that the freedom of the curriculum was confusing for some. They reported that the number of courses was too large, and that it was possible to receive a diploma without taking important core courses.

Research
1. It appears that the volume of publications is impressive, however there was no evidence attesting to the quality of the published work. Most of the research work has been published in non-peer reviewed venues.
2. It is not clear how the department evaluates the outcome of research and creative output of its faculty.
3. No documentation of the professional activities, especially design work, of the faculty was presented to the Committee.
4. The samples of published work that was submitted to the committee for review was mostly publications of student projects, as opposed to recent papers by the faculty. In addition this information was provided the last minute, which made it impossible to review it sufficiently.

Services

1. No advisement system for the students is in place.
2. It appears that the insufficient upkeep and maintenance of the physical facilities is demoralizing for students and faculty alike.
3. While the administrative support appears to be currently adequate for both faculty and students, there are concerns that this may not continue in the near future, because of the projected reduction of staff.

II. Positive Points

Curriculum / Teaching
1. The department acknowledges its weaknesses and has already put together a new curriculum plan.
2. It appears that the new proposal for the studio culture has been received and embraced positively by the whole faculty
3. All three post-graduate programs appear to be very successful.
4. The department is in close contact with the Technical Chamber of Greece (TEE).
5. There is evidence that the Department supports studies by the students and the faculty related to the development and rejuvenation of the city of Thessaloniki and the surrounding region.
6. There is evidence of rather extensive educational cooperation with other universities in Greece, neighboring countries, and beyond.
7. The lecture series has been very strong and has included famous architects, theoreticians, and practitioners.
8. It appears that the three current post-graduate programs (Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Monuments; Museology; Landscape Architecture) are well-defined, well managed, and overall effective. Moreover they have achieved relative visibility and recognition.
9. The proposal for additional post-graduate programs was positively received by the Committee.
10. It seems that the Department has managed successfully the loss of teaching personnel. This has required the existing faculty to rejuvenate themselves, which appears to be progressing successfully, however further losses cannot be sustained.

E2. Recommendations

General
1. We encourage that the Department maintain good relationship with the School and we recommend that the Dean recognizes the evolution of architectural discourse and practice and the contemporary challenges they both face.
2. We recommend that the University undertakes appropriate measures to prevent the disruption by minority groups of students of any procedures that relate to the proper functioning of any and all activities related to its mission.

Curriculum / Teaching
1. A more effective system of feedback for student evaluations beyond questionnaires has to be developed.
2. There needs to be a dialogue with the students concerning the finalization of the proposed new curriculum.
3. The Department should determine ways to benefit more from the work of the post-graduate programs.
4. There should be a system of mentorship and support of younger or new faculty by senior faculty.
5. The post-graduate programs should develop to become centers of excellence for the benefit of the whole Department.
6. The addition of the two new post-graduate programs should be designed to better prepare the students to enter the evolving realm of architecture practices and research.

Research
1. The Department should pursue the dissemination of the findings of research through peer-reviewed publications.
2. The Department should pursue a closer connection between the research undertaken in the Department and the studios.
3. The Department should identify research projects that fulfill strategic goals relevant to the Department of Architecture.

Services
1. Policies should be set in place for students to avail themselves of various work study opportunities (student assistants, professional internships, service work) on campus.

F. Epilogue

The ultimate goal of a School or Department of Architecture should be to prepare students to enter dynamically the profession of architecture not to the exclusion of those who because of their personal interests may wish to pursue fields related to the world of architecture. These objectives can only be achieved by an administrative structure and faculty where, through a creative synergy and clearly defined roles, can bring to life a curriculum based on knowledge of the past, an evaluation of the present, and an informed realistic vision of what will define architecture and the architect as one who can address in multiple ways future challenges.

The AUT has a rich history upon which to build as it moves forward. This is a history based on the foundations of past achievements and the legacies of faculty who have distinguished themselves as practicing professionals, educators and thinkers about the condition of architecture and its related fields.

The challenge remains as to how a renewed faculty can build on this strong past while accepting fearlessly the need for change related to curriculum and teaching methodologies so that, as a department within the context of a major university, it can remain both relevant and effective. In order for this to happen cognizant of the need to educate students both at pre-graduate and post-graduate level, major components related to the educating of an architect are addressed.

CURRICULUM

Any viable architectural curriculum must be the result of and reflect the interests and needs of administration, faculty and students. It should build on past achievement and experimentation, success and failure and be informed by an objective evaluation of past outcomes across the curriculum. It should define a framework based on educational goals and within which faculty may communicate their own knowledge, hopes and reservations about the future of architecture and its related disciplines. The curriculum should also be structured to take into account time-frames and sequence of course content and which acknowledges the maturing and evolving interests of both pre-graduate and post-graduate students. A clearly defined curriculum core can, along with the profiles of the faculty committed to it, contribute to establishing the identity of the department.

FACULTY

There must be a retention of existing faculty who have a proven commitment to the Department and new faculty recruited who by their credible educational and professional backgrounds, diversity and personal drive, can contribute to the evolving of the existing curriculum and can also contribute to bringing to life the proposals for a revised curriculum that addresses the introductory paragraph.

All faculty should have evidence of their ability through their teaching methodology, to

effectively communicate their knowledge along with the intent and content of any syllabus to their students.

The faculty as a body should be able to benefit from their diversity by demonstrating a willingness to interact through structured forums such as symposiums, seminars, team teaching, and critical exchange through creative outcomes in design, research, writings etc of their students.

STUDENTS

The Greek education system should, beginning at ministerial level, encourage the recruitment of those students regardless of background, to apply for and be accepted through a screening process that identifies not only those who qualify because of their general education and intelligence testing, but also signal their potential as students of architecture.

The system should allow conditions and freedom of action to the AUT and by extension the Polytechnic School and the Department of Architecture, to recruit a diverse student body not only within the EU bit also neighboring countries and beyond. This diversity once achieved must be facilitated by addressing issues of language and cultural differences, challenges, which, if met, may result in student collaborations whose creative outcomes may be both innovative and instructive to the student body at large.

There also needs to be generated those mechanisms and course content which will assist students in making that transition from student to professional lives of consequence and fulfillment.

RESEARCH

The role of applied research is essential in the conceiving and making of a work of architecture not to the exclusion of pure research related to such fields as building technology, fabrication, social science, the arts, history and theory etc. which can inform any applied research or more directly the thinking that must take place prior to the development of an architectural idea or concept.

ADMINISTRATION

The administrative structure must facilitate essential interaction between the different curriculum areas and the interests and needs of their respective faculty, the Department and the Polytechnic School, the resources of the AUT, and ultimately the opportunities presented for interaction and cooperation between the host city Thessaloniki and the Department. It should also be able to facilitate modes of cooperation, cross fertilization and creative and intellectual exchange between the Department and independent bodies or organizations within Greece, the EU and beyond.

The administration should by definition through the composition of its members, along with essential infrastructure, be able to meet the daily needs of all students and faculty.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Physical infrastructure is essential in making possible for students and faculty the realization of a curriculum. This should include a secure environment that celebrates and promotes student work and generates a spirit and atmosphere of collaboration between students, between students and faculty and faculty. A cohesive physical environment can contribute to the daily well being of the students while allowing the expression of their creative individuality. This atmosphere could be described as the primary element in creating a studio

culture which being combined with the proposed dynamic re-imagined curriculum could establish for the Department of Architecture of the ATU an identity that addresses the architectural challenges of the 21st century.

The Members of the Committee

1.   **Dr. Chris Yessios** (Coordinator) _____

2.   **Prof. Theoharis David, FAIA** _____

3.   **Dr. Petros Petsimeris** _____

4.   **Dr. Kostas Terzidis** _____

5.   **Dr. Athanassios Economou** _____