

External Evaluation Report

July-August 2007

Postgraduate Study Programme (MA Degree)

**“Women and Gender:
Anthropological and Historical Approaches”**

of the Department of Social Anthropology and History
University of the Aegean.

Assessor: Professor Sarah Green, University of Manchester
(sarah.green@manchester.ac.uk)

*This report is submitted in accordance with the requirements of **Work Package 8.4** of the Programme, “External evaluation by external assessors”*

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Programme being evaluated:

“Women and Gender: Anthropological and Historical Approaches”

a 3-semester MA Degree Programme of the Department of Social Anthropology and History, University of the Aegean.

Assessor: Sarah Green, Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester

Contact details:

University of Manchester

Social Anthropology, School of Social Sciences

Arthur Lewis Building

Oxford Road,

Manchester M13 9PL

UK

email : sarah.green@manchester.ac.uk

Tel. +44 (0)161 275 3989. *Fax.* +44 (0)161 275 3970

Evaluation criteria:

This report is submitted in accordance with the requirements of Work Package Section 8.4 of the Programme, “External evaluation by external assessors.” The evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility of, and demand for, the Programme.

Assessor’s Background:

I studied for my **higher education** degrees at the University of Cambridge - BA (1985), MA (1988), PhD (1992) - and I specialised in Social Anthropology in all of these. My **PhD** focused on gender, sexuality and feminism in the UK; since that time, I have carried out a total of 6 **research projects** (including fieldwork) in various parts of Greece (Argolid Valley, Epirus and, most recently, Lesvos), specialising particularly on issues relating to a sense of

location, borders and boundaries, place and environment. In addition, I have carried out two other research projects in the UK, looking at the introduction of new information and communications technologies (ICTs) to public and charitable organizations, particularly those involving women (e.g. the Manchester Women's Electronic Village Hall).

A selection of my publications include: *Notes from the Balkans: Locating Marginality and Ambiguity on the Greek-Albanian Border* (2005, Princeton University Press; winner of the **Douglass award for best contribution to Europeanist Anthropology 2006**, Society of Europeanist Anthropology (American Anthropological Association); *Urban Amazons: the Gender, Sexuality and Identity Battles of London* (1997, Macmillan); "From Hostile Backwater to Natural Wilderness: On the Relocation of 'Nature' in Epirus, Northwestern Greece." (2005, *Conservation and Society* Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 436-460); "Scales of Place and Networks: an ethnography of the imperative to connect through information and communications technologies." (with Penny Harvey and Hannah Knox, 2005 *Current Anthropology* Vol. 46, No. 5, pp. 805-826); "Seeing what you know: changing constructions and perceptions of landscape in Epirus, northwestern Greece, 1945 and 1990" (2001, *History and Anthropology* Vol. 12, No. 3, pp.255-288); "Confronting the end of the 'California years': Argolid citrus farming and a changing environment" (1998, *Εθνογραφικά* , Vol. 11, special issue on the Peloponnese, pp. 189-192); 'Marking Transgressions: the use of style in a women-only community in London', (1991, *Cambridge Anthropology* vol.15, no.2, pp. 71-87); "Digital Ditches: working in the virtual grassroots" in Christina Garsten and Helena Wulff (eds), (2003) *New Technologies at Work: People, Screens and Social Virtuality*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 45-68); "Cotton to Computers: From Industrial to Information Revolutions". (2002, with Penny Harvey and Jon Agar, in Steve Woolgar (ed.) *Virtual Society? Technology, Cyberbole, Reality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 264-285); "Culture in a Network: Manchester women, webs and dykes" (2002, in Nigel Rapport (ed.), *British Subjects: An Anthropology of Britain*. London: Routledge, pp. 181-202); "Post-communist neighbours: relocating gender in a Greek-Albanian border community" (1997, in S. Bridger and F. Pine (eds), *Surviving Post-socialism: Local strategies and regional responses in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*. London: Routledge, pp. 80-105); "Patriarchy" (1996, co-authored with Fenella Cannell, entry in Adam Kuper (ed.), *The Social Science Encyclopedia*, Routledge).

My **teaching experience**: I have taught Social Anthropology courses across all levels, from first year undergraduate to final year Ph.D., and across a wide range of subjects (including gender and sexuality, and the anthropology of Greece); I have also taught courses

in Social and Political Sciences (University of Cambridge, specialising in gender and sexuality) and in Women's Studies (University of Manchester).

My administration experience: I have carried out almost all administrative tasks within academic departments, including being the director of both undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes at the University of Manchester, with overall responsibility for the organization, design, and examination of those degree programmes. For the last two years, I was the overall director of research degrees at the University of Manchester. Further, and in collaboration with Dr Eleanor Casella, I designed and founded a new undergraduate degree at the University of Manchester, the Joint Degree in Archaeology and Anthropology. That degree has been running since 2003.

My evaluation experience: I have acted as an external evaluator for a range of both degree and research programmes since 1995, including acting as the external assessor of the undergraduate degree programme in Anthropology and History at the University of the Aegean, and as the international assessor for postdoctoral research programmes for the Academy of Finland. I am currently on the UK's national Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) committee for anthropology. This committee assesses the quality of research for academics working in the entirety of the UK.

Language ability: I am fluent in English and Greek; I speak some French, Italian, Albanian, Finnish and Turkish.

The Evaluation

1. Introduction, summary and background

The MA Programme, “Women and Gender: anthropological and historical approaches,” administered through the Department of Anthropology and History at the University of the Aegean, has been running since 2003. Each year since then, 15 students have been accepted onto the programme after an assessment of candidates’ applications, and the results of an English language examination; the candidates accepted onto the programme are judged against published criteria, which are made known to the candidates in advance. The programme is three semesters long: 2 semesters of taught courses and 1 semester during which students work intensely on their dissertation topic (12,000-15,000 words), with the advice of a main supervisor and a dissertation committee of three members of staff. Students take a total of 8 courses over the two semesters (though initially it was 9), all but one of which are compulsory and designed for the programme. The balance of courses is aimed at ensuring that students receive sufficient training in both anthropological and historical approaches towards gender, as well as training in research methods. The remaining one elective course is selected from the taught courses provided by the Department of Anthropology and History at the University of the Aegean.

Each taught course has a similar structure: each lasts for one semester and is taught in 3-hour sessions once a week; each one is under the responsibility of one member of staff, but it is taught by a small team of lecturers, each of whom run 2-4 weekly sessions; and in each, the students are assessed by a combination of written work and oral presentations.

As already stated, students also prepare a dissertation of 12,000-15,000 words long. The topic of study is selected by each student with the guidance of a main supervisor, and the topics are approved for study by the academic committee that administers the degree programme.

By the end of their studies, students will have achieved a thorough understanding and knowledge of a wide range of anthropological and historical approaches towards women, gender and equality issues; they will have learned how to present their understanding and knowledge both orally and in writing; and through their work on their dissertations, they will have been trained to make use of their knowledge in order to pursue independent scholarship. This prepares them well both for research at a higher level (e.g. for a Ph.D.) and for an

intellectually agile understanding of questions and problems involving gender, and particularly gender inequality, in wider social, political and economic contexts.

In this sense alone, this programme is a valuable one, both intellectually and in wider economic, political and social terms within Greece, particularly as there are so few degree programmes dedicated to gender studies in Greece. Every year since 2003, this programme has professionally trained young scholars in a deep understanding of the character of gender relations and gender inequality, both cross-culturally and across time. I am aware that many of the students of this course already are, or plan to be, involved in education in Greece, either as teachers or in some other capacity, and that several others have gone on to study towards a Ph.D. Given the European Union's emphasis on the need to tackle issues of gender equality as a matter of urgency across the members states, this programme provides an invaluable resource for Greece towards achieving this objective.

The programme was originally funded in 2002 using European Union resources administered through EPEAK II (Special Management Service for Corporate Planning in Education and Primary Professional Training, part of the Ministry of Education and Religions), within Measure 4.2, "Programmes supporting women within undergraduate and postgraduate studies; programmes of study and research programmes concerning women"; and within the Activity Category 4.2.1.a, "Postgraduate Study Programmes on Gender and Equality." The programme has met all the objectives laid out in the initial proposal set out in 1999 submitted to EPEAK II, and has surpassed many of them; the changes that have been made to the programme since it began in 2003 have all been carried out in order to adjust and improve the curriculum or structure of the programme; and the extremely high level of commitment towards this programme by its main organizers (which has often been well beyond the normal call of duty) is made obvious by the professional way in which the programme is administered and maintained (including the professional design of the publicity materials), the way the website is maintained, and the wide range of additional activities (lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences) organized around the themes relating to this programme. Moreover, the high quality of students attracted to this programme, and the equally high quality of teaching, is made obvious through a survey of the dissertations written by students over the last three years (2003-4, 2004-5, 2005-6): the range of topics tackled, the creative way in which students approached these topics and the use of a wide range of resources, research techniques and media in producing these texts made them a delight for me to read. I was sorry that I did not have time to read them all in detail. The intellectual quality and rigour of these texts is easily comparable with similar texts in the UK with which I am

familiar. Although these dissertations focus strongly on Greek topics and regions, their quality is not compromised by this emphasis.

In summary, this programme has been an outstanding success that addresses an important need in higher education within Greece. As an MA programme tackling gender issues, it is exemplary; having worked on several such programmes in the UK, this one easily sits amongst the best of them.

The remainder of this report provides further details of my assessment of the activities covered by each Work Package (1 to 9) of the programme, and makes brief comments on a few minor issues that the programme organizers might find helpful. None of these comments relate to any serious difficulties or problems with the programme; they are intended only as constructive suggestions, not as indications of problems that need to be solved.

Work Package 1: Preparation for the commencement of the Programme

This work package mainly involved the commissioning of a series of review studies relating to the themes of the MA Programme from experienced academics, so as to gain an overview of the current state of scholarship in studies of gender within history and anthropology. This was a wise move, for two reasons. Firstly, at the time the Programme was founded, there were few degree courses dedicated to gender issues within Greece, and none that focused especially on a combination on anthropological and historical approaches. For that reason, there were few pre-existing models of a curriculum for such a programme of study. There was thus a need to have an overview of the existing literature and to identify the key issues being currently debated and researched, so as to be in a position to properly design the content of the teaching curriculum of the new Programme. Secondly, these studies could thereafter act as a valuable resource, written in Greek, providing a guide to the debates and literature for students and colleagues alike.

The initial studies that were produced for this purpose are indeed impressive (not surprising, as they were carried out by highly qualified academic staff), and are now openly available on the Programme's website for anyone to consult (<http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/meletes.htm>). This website also includes three further studies carried out after the Programme had begun running: they demonstrate a continued commitment to increasing knowledge and resources for the Programme. The studies were as follows:

Initial studies:

Rania Astrinaki, *Women and Gender: anthropological approaches*
(Ράνια Αστρινάκη, *Γυναίκες και Φύλα: Ανθρωπολογικές Προσεγγίσεις*)

Pothiti Handzaroula, *Historiographic Approaches Towards Gender*
(Ποθητή Χαντζαρούλα, *Ιστοριογραφικές Προσεγγίσεις του Φύλου*)

Despina Nazou, *Women and Work in Greece: presentation and review of the literature with an emphasis on social science*
(Δέσποινα Νάζου, *Γυναίκες και Εργασία στην Ελλάδα: Παρουσίαση και σχολιασμός της βιβλιογραφίας με έμφαση στις κοινωνικές επιστήμες*)

Further studies:

Athina Athanasiou, *The Study of Gender as an Analytical Tool in the area of Health*
(Αθηνά Αθανασίου, *Η μελέτη του φύλου ως αναλυτικού εργαλείου στο χώρο της υγείας*)

Dimitra Samiou, *Gender and Politics (end of 19th – beginning of 21st centuries)*
(Δήμητρα Σαμίου, *Φύλο και Πολιτική (τέλη 18ου- αρχές 21ου αι.)*)

Evi Kladouhou, *Education and Gender in Greece: Annotated Bibliography*
(Εύη Κλαδούχου, *Εκπαίδευση και Φύλο στην Ελλάδα: Σχολιασμένη καταγραφή της βιβλιογραφίας*)

As can be seen, the first three studies consisted of wide overviews of the central themes of the Programme, which provided both organizers of the programme and future students with a baseline framework of literature and themes from which to develop a framework for the degree. The second set of studies focused on more specialised themes; once the Programme had been successfully established, it made sense that the subsequent studies began to specialise more and provide more in-depth focus on particular issues and themes. Neither the earlier nor the later studies carried specific recommendations for the Programme's designers, and approach that again I think was wise: this allowed the Programme designers to make use of these texts in any way they thought appropriate, without being constrained by specific recommendations. As a collection, these texts now provide an excellent teaching resource; they could easily be turned into an edited book collection so as to be made available to other gender courses in Greece. However, given that they are already freely available on the Programme's website, this is possibly not a high priority at the moment.

The only studies that were commissioned within the Programme but are not made available on the web pages were carried out by Nefeli Hadzidiakou, and they concerned electronic archiving and surveying of Greek ethnography (Νεφέλη Χατζηδιάκου, «Αρχειοθέτηση και επισκόπηση ελληνικών εθνογραφικών κειμένων»). I was given access to a hard copy of these two studies, and I can confirm that they focus on the technical issues of developing and operating an electronic database system based on Microsoft Access to make Greek ethnographic texts accessible to students.

Work Package 2: Call for applications and Selection of Candidates for the Programme

This work package concerns the process of selecting candidates to be admitted to the Programme, judged against a series of published criteria (http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/metaptyxiakes_spoudes/kritiria.htm). Candidates who wish to study for this programme are expected to already possess an undergraduate degree (or equivalent; no degree subject is specified for entry to the Programme), to pass a test in English (due to the high volume of texts in English for this course) and to be interviewed. A committee selected from the full time members of staff, under the guidance of a chair (usually Vasiliki Moutafi), examine the paperwork, interview candidates and make the final decisions. The work and decisions of this committee are recorded and kept in files in the administration office to which I was given access. It is clear that the selection of candidates has been made entirely in line with the criteria laid out and in a rigorous and transparent manner.

In my judgement, the selection criteria are entirely in line with the requirements of equivalent MA programmes in the UK and are also in accordance with the Bologna Agreement for postgraduate study. The one question that could arise concerns the lack of a specification of undergraduate degree subjects in the entry requirements for this Programme. However, in my view this is correct for this Programme: first, the Programme is designed to provide students with all the necessary anthropological and historical knowledge required to understand the material concerning gender in the Programme; second, the issues of gender and gender inequality are inherently multi-disciplinary, and therefore it would be an advantage to have a student group with a wide range of undergraduate training participating in the course; and third, it allows the selection committee the flexibility to select the best candidates from the widest possible pool of candidates. In any case, having read, and seen the

high quality, of some of the dissertations that have been written by the students, I am in no doubt that candidates have been entirely appropriately selected for this course.

In accordance with requirements, the Programme is widely advertised in newspapers, on the Internet and on posters that are sent to most other educational institutions in Greece.

I noted that the best three candidates from each year are selected to be awarded a grant (the brief criteria are listed at http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/metapyxiakes_spoudes/ypotrofies.htm). 'Best' is defined by a combination of the ranking of the candidate upon entry into the Programme, and then by the candidate's mark during the first semester of study. The best three of these, providing that a minimum mark of 7 out of 10 is achieved, are awarded the grant.

Since 2003, the programme has attracted increasing numbers of candidates (the majority of whom are women, which is not at all surprising, given the theme of the Programme), with the exception of this last academic year (2006-7), which was disrupted due to industrial action and student occupations. Until this year, the ratio of applications to acceptances moved from 2.5 applications per candidate accepted in 2003-4, to 3.2 in 2005-6. For a small and relatively new postgraduate programme, and one which is located in a university that is quite far away from the urban centres of Greece (Athens and Thessaloniki), this is an impressive level of applications. Demand for this Programme has thus been demonstrated over the last four years.

Work Package 3: Delivery and development of Coursework

This work package concerns the organization of the curriculum and teaching for this Programme, the details of which are openly available on the Internet (<http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/mathimata.htm>, which provides access to all the courses and the course descriptions; and <http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/mathimata/programma.htm>, which provides detailed timetables of the courses).

As mentioned in the introduction above, each of the taught courses has the same basic structure: a series of 3-hour weekly sessions, divided into 2-4 segments, each taught by a member of staff or guest lecturer.

For example, for the year 2004-5, the lecture course Historical Approaches Towards Gender (Ιστορικές Προσεγγίσεις των Φύλων; see <http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/mathimata/mathimataI/mathimaA2.htm>) was organized by Maria Stamatoyiannopoulou, and co-organized with Eleni Fournaraki and Yiannis Yianitsiotis. In

addition, several other members of staff contributed to the teaching of this course. The 12 weekly 3-hour seminars were divided into 5 modules covering particular topics over a period of one, two or three weeks. During the course, students were expected to contribute oral presentations (15% of the mark) and small written presentations (15%); and following the end of the course, students were asked to write a longer essay of 3-4000 words on particular topics as laid out in the course outline (70% of the mark). All courses in the Programme followed this same basic pattern.

In this way, students were given access to a wide level of teaching expertise on an equally wide range of topics and literature, and could select from particular modules within courses which topics they would focus upon in depth for their written assessment. The number and range of teaching staff made available to this Programme through this 'articulated' method of teaching is truly impressive (http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/akadimaiko_prosopiko.htm). There are currently fully 22 members of teaching staff contributing towards the teaching and supervising of this Programme. That is an enviable level of expertise that is made available to students, and I cannot think of any other MA Programme in gender studies that provides students with access to that breadth of teaching staff.

The one possible disadvantage of having so many contributors to the teaching of courses in this Programme is that students might not have the opportunity to develop a sense of the coherence of the courses overall, or of the Programme overall. However, having looked at the course outlines, it is clear that each module is interlinked with the others through the organization of courses by the one member of staff who is responsible overall for the course; and students do get an opportunity to work closely with one or more particular members of staff while developing and writing their dissertations. The dissertation is clearly crucial in this respect: it not only provides students with an opportunity to make use of many of the different elements of what they have learned during the academic year (while focusing on one particular theme or topic of their choice), but it also helps them to develop research and writing skills, while working intensely with particular members of staff. The selection of the main supervisor is made with the agreement of the student and ratified by the Programme's academic committee; and the title of dissertations are agreed with the main supervisor and ratified in an annual meeting, which checks the titles for topic relevance (i.e. that the topic chosen is appropriate for the Programme).

As mentioned in the introduction, the topics of the dissertation were wide-ranging, including: the medicalisation of childbirth in contemporary Greek society (E. Ioannou); a

study of the space and embodiment of public toilets (E. Kyratsou); the talk about women of Turkey by women of Lesbos (A. Bogordou); immigrant pupils in Greek schools (E-A. Michalopoulou); women mechanics in Greece (D. Orthodoxou); the reproduction of gendered and family relations within the comedies of commercial Greek cinema in the 1960s (C. Avgerinou); women's voices and silences: the feminist movement in Greece and its relations with the academic sphere (E. Iliadou); from normal school to teacher training college: women teachers in Lesbos, 1924-1987 (E. Ksenelli); "Beauty for real women": women consumers in contemporary Greek society. Beauty products, advertising and femininity (M-L Papadelli); historical approaches towards the construction of masculinity (E. Michalakou); European Union policies for gender equality within education and professional training: the reproduction of gender stereotypes (F. Noti); gender and magic; woman in 19th century art (A. Spyrtzi). With only a few exceptions, students rose to the occasion for working on these pieces and achieved both high quality and intellectually rigorous pieces of work. I particularly enjoyed looking at these.

I only have a couple of suggestions to make about the dissertations. First, from a brief inspection, there appeared to be a fairly wide disparity in their word lengths. Providing that students are not going beyond the stated word limit, this should not create a problem of equity. However, it might be an idea to require candidates to state the total number of words of their texts on the title page of their dissertation to encourage students to keep in mind the final word limit. Second, while the provisions for academic supervision and oversight of the dissertations are excellent, there does not appear to be any opportunity for students to present their ideas for their dissertations in a seminar setting (i.e. so that students can discuss these ideas with each other). Obviously, as the bulk of the work for the dissertation is completed in the third semester, at a time when there are no taught courses, it would be difficult to convene a joint seminar at that time. However, it might be helpful to students to convene one or two sessions in the second semester during which they could discuss their preliminary ideas with each other. This is simply a suggestion that the organizers of the MA might wish to consider; it is in no way a requirement.

Changes to the curriculum:

Regarding the changes in the Programme overall: in summary, the initial curriculum was as follows:

Semester 1 (2003-4):

Three compulsory courses:
Anthropological Approaches towards Gender;
Historical Approaches towards Gender; and
Methodological Debates.

In addition, students were required to choose one course from a selection of five courses also offered by the Department of Anthropology and History:

Family and European Historiography;
Ethnography of Greece and Southern Europe;
Anthropology of Kinship and Social Gender;
Medical Anthropology; and
Oral History.

Semester 2 (2003-4):

Students took a total of five compulsory courses during the second semester:
Women and Politics;
Debates on Women's Employment;
Multicultural Education and Gender;
Gender, Body and Health; and
Art, Language, Gender.

Semester 3 (2003-4):

During this semester, students worked exclusively on their dissertations, and had a deadline of January 15th to submit the final version for examination.

By 2006-7, the following changes had been made:

- **The total number of courses to be taken were reduced from 9 to a total of 8.** The Board of Studies judged (correctly, in my view) that 9 courses during the period of one academic year, and while preparing for writing a dissertation, was too heavy a load. The course that was dropped was “Multicultural Education and Gender.”

- **The Methodology course was shifted to the second semester.** This decision makes a lot of sense, for two reasons. First, given that methodology will most directly concern students during their preparation for their dissertations, it makes sense to run the course in the same semester as students are preparing their dissertation topics. Second, in my experience, students understand the significance of methodological questions much more easily once they have already completed a certain level of training in the conceptual and empirical elements of their studies. Therefore, teaching methodology in the second semester is likely to be much more effective than teaching it in the first.
- The course **“Women and Politics”** was renamed **“Gender and Politics”** and the course **“Debates on Women’s Employment”** was renamed **“Gender, Work and Consumption”**. These changes clearly reflect changes within the wider literature on gender issues, in recognition of the way both the analysis and politics of gender constructions and relations have shifted. The changes show that the regular review of the Programme put in place by the organizers is working efficiently to encourage revision of the Programme whenever appropriate.
- **Streamlining of extension for dissertation deadline.** In 2003, the deadline for the dissertation was January 15th, and students had to go through quite a complicated process to apply for an extension. Now, students can be automatically granted an extension until May if they apply for it. In effect, students are able to spend from June until the following May working on their dissertation. This is a sensible change, as it streamlines and makes much simpler the process of applying for extensions, and allows students to have in mind two deadlines: January 15th now becomes the early deadline and the following May becomes the final extended deadline. Given the workload of the taught courses that students have to complete, and the amount of work that goes into writing the dissertation, this ability to get an extension is in any case a sensible one in my view, and will further encourage a high quality of dissertation.

In effect, this Programme has improved and matured since 2003, and the Programme’s committee has taken every opportunity to improve it during the period it has been running.

Work Package 4: Procuring and development of paper and electronic resources and software

This work package is concerned with the provision of the materials necessary for students to carry out independent study for their degree. The Programme organizers were in the good position of having at their disposal the best library collection of anthropology texts in a Greek university, which includes a large number of gender-related texts, and a strong library collection of historical texts. The Programme increased the gender-related collection by 250 new texts, and has provided access to a range of electronic resources, as well as keeping students' past dissertations in the library. In addition, the commission of the study on methods to electronically access and classify Greek ethnographies has provided students with a valuable searchable resource, and the University of the Aegean's interlibrary loan facility further extends students' access to textual resources.

In addition, there is a postgraduate work lab, which provides desks and Internet-connected computers that are at the disposal of the students. This lab is conveniently located close to the ethnography lab, where students can both search for and loan ethnographic works.

In summary, although resources are relatively tight, they are clearly being used efficiently, and the Programme organizers have provided all the necessary resources for students to successfully complete their studies.

Work Package 5: Linkage of the Programme with research and the job market

Within this work package, a series of activities relating to both extending research on issues relating to the Programme, and an exploration of the way this Programme could contribute towards students' employment, was carried out. For the former, the three studies by Athanasiou, Samiou and Kladochou mentioned in the discussion on Work Package 1 above, were carried out in part to both explore that relationship between the Programme and issues relating to work, and to provide a resource for students studying elements of gender as they relate to work (<http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/meletes.htm>). In addition, there have been a series of lectures given each year under the auspices of the programme by postgraduate students and others, which covered current research being done, much of which was work-related. Each year, between 6 and 8 such lectures have been presented (<http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/dialexeis.htm>).

Beyond that, a questionnaire was developed to ask students about their own perceived relationship between taking this course of study and their approach towards employment. The questionnaire, which was distributed during the third and final semester of the 2003-4 academic year, aimed to learn what motivated students to take the course, and in particular, to what extent their professional activities are related to their interest in the Programme, and whether they believe that their future choices in employment will be affected by the knowledge and skills they developed during their studies. In addition, the questionnaire asked students to comment on the possible changes that may have occurred within their professional career path and development during, or because of, their involvement in the Programme. In addition, the questionnaire asked students in what substantive ways they might use the resources provided by the Programme in their current or imagined future work lives.

Of the 15 students surveyed, 12 (i.e. 80%) responded, even though this was not obligatory. Students on this course had employment in education (5 of 12), the civil service (3 of 12), self-employment (3 of 12), researcher (1 of 12) and one was unemployed. The overall results of the survey showed that while students did not believe their work lives had substantially changed as a result of attending this Programme, they did believe that their understanding of issues relating to gender and gender inequality had substantially developed during the period of the course, and that they believed they would make use of this knowledge in the future. In short, students reported that the Programme had done what it set out to do: develop an understanding and knowledge of gender relations and inequality both cross-culturally and historically, which results in a resource for students to use in their future employment lives. At the same time, students indicated their perception that their world of employment would be unlikely to substantially change in the immediate future as a result of their new knowledge and skills. To my mind, this reflects a recognition of the very slow pace at which substantive changes in gender relations and inequality occurs within the workplace; studies of any changes in gender inequality within the last couple of centuries has repeatedly demonstrated this slow pace of change. However, rather than read this in a negative light, it suggests that the Programme is effectively contributing in important ways to students' understanding of gender relations and gender inequality, and it suggests that in order to effect substantive changes in the world of employment, this Programme must continue well into the future.

My only comment here is that in an ideal world, it would be helpful to be able to contact former students 3 or 4 years after leaving the Programme and asking them similar questions to this questionnaire. By that time, former students will have had a chance to make

use of their Programme of study. From my own experiences of attempting to follow up former students to discover what became of them, I am aware that this is a very difficult task, so I am certainly not making this suggestion a requirement. However, it might be an idea to explicitly ask students, when they complete their course, to provide forwarding addresses or emails, and to write to the Programme whenever they change their employment, to let them know of their progress. In my experience, this suggestion does actually prompt quite a few students to keep in contact in the future.

Work Package 6: Development of the international character of study

Within this work package, the original proposal planned to work towards creating greater links with international gender scholarship and institutions, both through inviting international scholars to attend workshops, seminars and conferences at the University of the Aegean, and involvement with students exchange programmes abroad, such as ERASMUS/SOCRATES.

Given the combination of the intensive work involved in running the new Programme, the relatively remote location of the University of the Aegean and the relatively constrained resources provided for international outreach, the achievements within this work package have been a considerable success (see <http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/drastiriotites.htm> for a range of events). I am aware that the organizers would have liked to have achieved considerably more within this work package, but I think it would have been unrealistic to expect to be able to achieve greater amounts of international outreach at this stage of the Programme, and given the constraints outlined above. Moreover, there are signs that the level of international collaboration has been increasing each year. This year, for example, a collaboration has developed between the Programme and the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Contemporary Thought and Political Change, within the Politics and Philosophy of Gender team. In addition, members of the Programme's staff regularly attend international conferences.

My main comment here is that this aspect of the Programme requires input of considerably more resources in order to be developed further. International networking, while immensely productive for programmes such as this one, is both costly and time-consuming, and requires dedicated resources in order for it to develop fully. The practical challenges that this Programme faces – in particular, being based geographically in a region that is relatively difficult to reach from most other parts of Europe except during the summer; and the fact that most of the materials about this Programme are available only in Greek, a language that has a

reputation (as does Finnish) for being difficult to learn and understand – makes the effort of creating and maintaining international links that much more difficult without adequate resources.

My main suggestion, therefore, is to encourage the seeking out of considerably more funding for developing these international links. This should not only include resources for inviting international scholars to the University of the Aegean, but also funds to allow members of staff and students to attend international conferences, workshops and events. It is through these kinds of contacts that collaborative networks develop.

Work Package 7: Publicity and Dissemination of Results

This Work Package is concerned with advertising the Programme (and a series of fine posters and leaflets have been produced in order to do this, along with study guides for each year, and details of all aspects of the Programme available on the Internet - <http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/index.htm>), as well as publicising its work through the holding of seminars, workshops and conferences. The details of these events can be found on the Internet (<http://www.aegean.gr/gender-postgraduate/drastiriotes.htm>), in most cases with full details of the programme, the participants and sometimes details of the papers given. These events involved many scholars from other Greek universities. Furthermore, this year a joint conference held in Mytilene between graduates of this Programme and graduates from the postgraduate programme in Educational/School Psychology in the Pedagogy of Gender Equality from the Department of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, was an extremely effective way of publicising and sharing findings.

My only comment here is that, again in an ideal world, it would be good to have more information about these events provided in English on the website; although unable to speak Greek could not participate in these events, knowledge of the types of topics researched and the other activities that the Programme carries out could help to increase international links. Once again, however, I emphasise my recognition that this suggestion is an ideal, and one that in practice is difficult to achieve due to restrictions in time and resources.

Work Package 8: Evaluation of the Programme

This work package concerns the range of activities undertaken to monitor, assess and improve the Programme. Included within this package are the regular meetings held by the members of staff to assess the progress of the Programme and to make any necessary adjustments (the results of which have been listed under Work Package 3 above); the regular distribution of questionnaires to students about their views of the Programme; and the commissioning of an external assessor of the Programme, whose purpose is to review and evaluate the effectiveness and functioning of the Programme (i.e., this report).

The **student questionnaires** asked respondents about five areas: the programme of courses; the coordination of the courses; the methods of examination and evaluation; the availability of educational resources; the adequacy of administrative support. Of the results that I saw (2003-4 and 2004-5), the range of comments from students were overall positive in terms of the interest of the Programme and administrative support; there were repeated comments about the pressure of the workload, particularly in the second semester (something that was tackled recently by removing one of the courses, as noted earlier); some students felt that the modular system of teaching courses was a little confusing at times, but for the most part, students appeared to cope with it well. The rest of the critical comments were familiar to anyone who reads student questionnaires anywhere, and relating to any course of study: requests for more resources, both textual and electronic; requests for more feedback on written work; requests for better teaching rooms and facilities. In all these cases, the difficulties neither related to the content nor the structure of the Programme, but the resources made available to students. However, from my experience of reading such questionnaires for over 15 years, these showed a remarkable level of satisfaction with the course overall, and the Programme organizers should feel rightly pleased by the results of these surveys.

My only comment about the questionnaires regards the questions themselves: all of them invite students to comment on the negative, problematic or difficult aspects of the Programme. In my experience, it is often as helpful to invite students to discuss what they experienced as the best parts of the Programme as well as the worst – in other words, to ask for positive, as well as negative, feedback. Knowing which aspects of the Programme students liked best (ranging from course design, to content, to supervision and feedback) allows Programme organizers to build on their strengths as well as tackle their weaknesses. In addition, it might be worth asking questions about the amount of effort and input the student themselves felt that they contributed towards their successful completion of the Programme.

This question reminds students that studying towards any degree is always a collaborative effort, requiring as much input from the student as it does from the academic and administrative staff.

Regarding the **external evaluation**: I can say without hesitation that I have been given all possible assistance in examining the different elements of this course, and that the administrative support I have received has been entirely professional and excellent. The paperwork associated with this Programme is kept in perfect order and I was given any document or item I wished within minutes of requesting it. Again, the commitment to this Programme on the part of the staff shines through the good order in which all the administrative papers are kept, and the enthusiasm with which I was assisted in the process of my assessment. The academic staff have also been unstintingly helpful and open, and I would like to express my gratitude for that.

In summary then, given that I have been asked to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility and demand for this programme, I can conclude that it has been effective, efficient, flexible and that the demand for the course has been rising. Although there are one or two areas that could be developed further (e.g. the international networking), these areas require further resources rather than greater commitment. For the most part, the Programme is run with tremendous and evident enthusiasm, in a clearly professional manner.

Work Package 9: Management of the Work

This work package concerns the formal regulations that control the administration of the Programme. Every year, these regulations have been reviewed and revised to reflect the kinds of changes mentioned in Work Package 3, and it lays out the budget for the programme. Having reviewed this document, I am satisfied that the actual running of the Programme has been carried out in accordance with these regulations.

Concluding remarks:

To sum up: this Programme has been running now for four years, and during that time, it has demonstrated its capacity to attract students, to deliver a rigorous programme of teaching and supervision, to organize a whole host of additional academic activities, and to be flexible enough to develop and improve the Programme over the years. Moreover, it is one of the few Programmes in Greece that address questions of gender and gender inequality, and given that

it is doing this to such a high level of administrative and intellectual professionalism, it is providing an extremely important contribution towards the European Union's aims of tackling issues of gender inequality. I sincerely hope that this Programme will continue to run for many years into the future.