

20 Μαρτίου, 2017

Καθηγήτρια Μαίρη Κουτσελίνη  
Πρόεδρος  
Φορέας Διασφάλισης και Πιστοποίησης της Ποιότητας της Ανώτερης Εκπαίδευσης

Αγαπητή Δρ. Κουτσελίνη,

**Θέμα: Σχόλια σχετικά με την έκθεση της Εξωτερικής Επιτροπής Αξιολόγησης για το Ακαδημαϊκό Πρόγραμμα MSc in Biomedical Research, της Σχολής Μοριακής Ιατρικής Κύπρου του Ινστιτούτου Νευρολογίας και Γενετικής Κύπρου**

Θα ήθελα να σας ευχαριστήσω θερμά για την υλοποίηση της πιο πάνω αξιολόγησης που διεξάχθηκε την Παρασκευή 3 Μαρτίου 2017. Η κάθε εξωτερική αξιολόγηση αποτελεί σημαντικό εργαλείο για τη σωστή λειτουργία των οργανισμών και η ανεξάρτητη έκθεσή αξιολόγησης συμβάλει στην αντικειμενική προσπάθεια για βελτίωση της ποιότητας της εκπαίδευσης. Με ικανοποίηση έχουμε αναγνώσει τα πολύ θετικά στοιχεία των ευρημάτων για τα προγράμματα προς αξιολόγηση της Σχολής μας. Παραθέτουμε, σε ξεχωριστό έντυπο, απαντήσεις σε όλα τα σχόλια που έχουν εγερθεί από τους αξιολογητές.

Είμαστε στη διάθεσή σας για οτιδήποτε άλλο χρειαστείτε.

Με εκτίμηση,

Καθ. Λεωνίδας Α. Φυλακτού  
Γενικός Διευθυντής  
Σχολή Μοριακής Ιατρικής Κύπρου



ΣΧΟΛΗ ΤΟΥ ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟΥ ΝΕΥΡΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ & ΓΕΝΕΤΙΚΗΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ

Απαντήσεις στα σχόλια των αξιολογητών

## 1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

### Teaching personnel (page 6-7)

The CSMM already has a mechanism for attracting esteemed international academic through allocation of visiting faculty staff at all academic ranks.

In addition, CING holds regular journal club presentations / lectures which are delivered by many of the international collaborators of CING. Those lectures are attended by the students.

## 2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

### Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study (page 7)

Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study

We believe that the naming of the MSc in BMR is appropriate and reflects both the requirement for taught courses as well as the substantial experience gained by the CING in Biomedical Science which is ultimately transferred to the CSMM students. Especially since we are planning to implement the suggestion of the External Evaluation Committee to increase the number of taught courses to more than two; we are convinced that the present title is appropriate.

### Structure and Content of the Program of studies (page 7)

We appreciate this recommendation:

It addresses the need for students to be taught in topics related to the development of skills such as statistics, bioinformatics, etc. In regards to this component, CSMM students are already taught these skills in the form of transferable skill lectures.

Another aspect that will strengthen the laboratory based skills of the students will be that the course of Methodologies and Technologies Applied in Medical Genetics which is now taught in the spring semester will be offered during the autumn semester in order for the students to be fully exposed to the laboratory based method prior to starting their research projects.

### International Dimension (page 8)

Through participation in Erasmus+ (also for faculty members) faculty from other Universities are hosted. For example, Professor George Theofilidis (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) was hosted in 2015.



In addition to regular journal club presentations and meetings organized (for example Cyprus Society for Human Genetics Meeting, October 2016), through numerous international collaborations of the CSMM faculty there is also regular exposure to Biomedical Science leading researchers world-wide, with some examples listed below:

Visit of Prof. Angela Gritti (Gene Therapy), San Raffaele Scientific Institute, May 2013

Visit of Prof. Angela Vincent (Neuroimmunology), Univ. of Oxford, March 2014

Visit of Prof. Richard Reynolds (Glial cell biology), Imperial College London, July 2014

Visit of Prof. Panayiota Poirazi (Computational Neuroscience), University of Crete, July 2015

Our plan is to invite more faculty to teach at our courses, in order to enrich the students' learning experience and for this reason, a special regulation which refers to visiting faculty was established within the CSMM.

There is an ongoing effort to expand the dedicated budget for supporting visiting Professors.

#### **4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK**

##### **Infrastructures / Support (page 10)**

The CING/CSMM have a culture of ongoing training for all its staff, both academic and administrative.

The CSMM has organized specialized training for its academic staff through professional instructors from abroad (2013),

In addition, the CSMM academic staff has participated in an HRDA specialized training for teaching of professional courses (2015)

Furthermore, the CSMM academic staff has the opportunity to participate in mobility actions abroad (through Erasmus+) for training purposes

Finally, the CSMM staff undergo ongoing training through participation in conferences, seminars and workshops, worldwide.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup>**

##### **Suggestions (page 14)**

1. We would be happy to accommodate the suggestion by the external evaluation committee. We also take into account the recommendation made by The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, which suggested that we should increase the number of taught





courses (i.e. above 20 ECTS) before the students begin their research in the laboratory. We will also strengthen the laboratory skills of the students as per actions described above. Another aspect that will strengthen the laboratory based skills of the students will be that the course of Methodologies and Technologies Applied in Medical Genetics which is now taught in the spring semester will be offered during the autumn semester in order for students for the students to be fully exposed to the laboratory based method prior to starting their research projects. Finally, we will strengthen both the taught and research components by extending the duration of the MSc in BMR from 1 to 2 years as per structure below:

1<sup>st</sup> semester (Fall, 1<sup>st</sup> year): 3 taught courses (total ECTS=30)

2<sup>nd</sup> semester (Spring, 1<sup>st</sup> year): 2 taught courses (total ECTS=20) + 1 research course (total ECTS=10)

3<sup>rd</sup> semester (Fall, 2<sup>nd</sup> year): 3 research courses (total ECTS=30)

4<sup>th</sup> semester (Spring, 2<sup>nd</sup> year): 3 research courses (total ECTS=30)

TOTAL PROGRAM ECTS=120, TOTAL DURATION=2 years

We would like this change to be effective starting the academic year 2018-2019, given that the application for the academic year 2017-2018 has already started. The suggested new structure can be applied provided that the program can maintain its accreditation.

2. This suggestion cannot be implemented in the Fall semester; it will be implemented in the Spring semester as the laboratory work will start in the Spring semester.
3. In regards to this, please refer to our response on “2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS - Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study” that is mentioned on page 1 of this document.
4. In regards to this, please refer to our response on “Suggestions, answer 1” that is mentioned on page 2 of this document.
5. In regards to this, CING is intensifying its efforts to internationalize CSMM with a particular focus in the region by utilizing existing links and by concentrating intensive efforts to show presence in this regional market.
6. In regards to this, please refer to our response on “2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS - International Dimension” that is mentioned on page 1 of this document.

