

Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: July 6th 2021

External Evaluation Report (E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
American College
- **Town:** Lefkosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Business
- **Department/ Sector:** Business
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In English:

Business Administration (12 months, 90 ECTS,
Masters, Distance Education)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English/Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):** n.a. (only elective courses)

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

A. Introduction

The EEC team:

Chair:

- Prof. Philip Vergauwen, Dean, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (SBS-EM), Université Libre de Bruxelles

Members:

- Prof. Pedro de Faria, Full Professor of Innovation Management, Department of Innovation Management and Strategy University of Groningen, Faculty of Economics and Business, The Netherlands
- Prof. Stephanie J Morgan, Professor and Director of Accreditations, Organizational Behaviour, Accreditations, University of Aberdeen Business School
- Prof. Pantelis M. Papadopoulos, Associate Professor of Educational Technology, University of Twente, **(Distance Learning Expert)**
- Markellos Potamitis- Student CUT

General introductory remarks

The EEC made it clear from the start of the visit that the purpose was not only confirmation of compliance with the required standards for the Master of Business Administration, 12 months, 90 ECTS, Distance Learning programme of the American College, but also to help the institution to implement and continuously improve the programmes (organisation, content and delivery).

The discussions that took place were hence in line with a “peer review”, i.e. very open, future-focused and in a broader context than just the standards. The context the EEC deemed relevant for this evaluation, was characterized by the (general) challenges of higher education. Some trends and evolutions in the world of HE have been accelerated by the pandemic (e.g. online delivery, hybrid learning, ...) and issues regarding globalisation and internationalisation, knowledge transfer and knowledge creation, impact of education and research, employability, ... were equally discussed to better frame the importance of the standards and of continuous improvement.

Overall, the EEC found evidence of national and international standard compliance, albeit that specific partial compliance was noted related to the Distance Learning aspects of the programme. The EEC commends the American College for its connections with the industry and its staff and faculty proficiency. Especially the experienced administrative staff of the School provides a very personalised, “well-nursed” environment for the on-line students. Students very much feel part of the “family” and appreciate the direct connections they enjoy amongst each other, but also with the faculty/teachers and staff members.

The EEC commends the programmes for having a direct impact on the local/regional economic development, answering to the needs of the industry and to the “personal development” desires of its participants.

Points of discussion, especially those leading to “partial compliance” and elaborated upon in the consultative parts of the report, and areas for further improvement/development concern:

1. An efficient and economically viable programme distance learning design and structure ensuring high-quality delivery will require further investments in tools and technologies allowing real collaborative learning and increased, more dynamic interaction and participation of the students. Distance learning comprises but does not equate on-line learning: well-designed, structural modules or parts of the programme have to be (further) developed to formally include and assess collaborative learning, active student participation and team-work. Distance learning should equally be seen as an aspect of differentiation, i.e. a complement in the strategic programme portfolio next to face-to-face delivery programmes.
2. Internationalisation-globalization (@home) of students equally requires scaling-up and diversifying the Virtual Learning Environment by making it much more than a repository of lectures, powerpoint presentations, an electronic library, etc... i.e., by adding specific add-ons to the live-stream lectures where direct interaction with students should go beyond Q&A or providing feedback. An international distance learning programme has to provide and deliver a living platform of experiential learning in which the industry and practice play an equally active role as in face-to-face learning. Lastly, the internationalisation plans are at this stage still relative unclear and need further explicitation.
3. The development of a clear strategy for the scaling-up of distance learning including necessary investments (IT infrastructure, software and human resources, i.e. digital learning experts) is required if the School should decide to pursue the growth path of distance education. Even if the School’s strategy does not envision great numbers of participants (to preserve the unique small-scale, personalised education it provides through distance learning today), updating and extending the IT structure is required for successful distance learning.

A more detailed and constructive analysis is provided in the sections “areas for improvement” and in the conclusions of the report below.

Agenda EEC visit, July 6th 2021

The online site visit took place according to the following schedule:

- 10:00 – 10:10 Brief introduction of the members of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC)
- 10:10 – 11:10 Meeting with the Head of the Institution and members of the Internal Evaluation Committee
Participants: Dr Marios Amerikanos, Dr Andreas Petasis and Dr Charalambos Louca
- 11:10 – 12:20 Meeting with the programme’s Coordinator
(standards, admission criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, the content and the persons involved in the program’s design and development, distance learning philosophy and methodology, learning material, interaction plan and interactive activities, study guides, ...)
Participants: Dr Andreas Petasis, Dr Charalambos Louca and Dr Marios Amerikanos
- 12:20 – 12:50 Meeting with students and/or student representatives
Participants: Mr Konstantinos Konstantinou, Ms Panagiota Marinou-Xhaholli, Ms Praxia Onoufriou
- 12:50 – 13:05 Meeting with members of the administrative staff
Participants: Mr Lakis Agathocleous, Mr Tasos Anastasiou, Ms Stella Georgiou
- 13:05 – 14:05 Lunch Break
- 14:05 – 15:05 Meeting with members of the teaching staff on each course for all the years of study

(CVs, academic qualifications, publications, research interests, research activity, compliance with staff ESG, duties in the institution and teaching obligations in other programmes, content of each course and its implementation (i.e., methodologies, selected bibliography, students' workload, compliance with Teaching ESG), learning outcomes, the content and the assessment of each course and their compliance with the level of the programme according to the EQF, assessment criteria, samples of final exams or other teaching material and resources.)

Participants: Dr Andreas Petasis, Dr Charalambos Louca, Dr Yiannos Rossides, Dr Christina Tsolaki, Mr Charis Millas and Ms Chrystalla Kazara

15:05 – 15:50 Virtual visit of the premises of the institution and exit discussion (questions, clarifications)
Participants: Dr Andreas Petasis, Dr Charalambos Louca, Dr Marios Amerikanos and Mr Sakis Papalexioiu

15:50 – 16:20 EEC has access to virtual lecture (recorded) and other material

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Philip VERGAUWEN	Dean, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management	Université Libre de Bruxelles (B)
Pedro DE FARIA	Chair Department of Innovation Management and Strategy, Professor Innovation Management, Faculty of Economics and Business	University of Groningen (NL)
Pantelis PAPAPOPOULOS	Associate Professor of Educational Technology (Distance Learning expert)	University of Twente (NL)
Stephanie MORGAN	Professor and Director of Accreditations, Organizational Behaviour, Accreditations	University of Aberdeen Business School (UK)
Markellos POTAMITIS	Student	Cyprus University of Technology (CY)

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
- 1.3 Public information**
- 1.4 Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

The American College operates for its Distance Learning MBA Programme all required policies, structures, regulations and processes for quality assurance of the programme of study. Teaching and administrative staff take on their responsibilities in quality assurance, ensuring academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud, intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff and supports the involvement of external stakeholders.

The EEC does, however, urge the School to give students and external stakeholders a more direct (as representative members of the committees), active and dynamic role in these processes as distance learning programmes require even more attention to active participation in these processes than face-to-face educational programmes.

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

The EEC finds the programme only partially compliant with respect to design and on-going monitoring/review. Although all structures for quality assurance are in place, full-fledged the distance learning MBA requires a more appropriate design allowing true collaborative learning and learning assessment (including the assessment of personal development, team-work competences and a more in-depth evaluation of dynamic participation).

Although the EEC finds overall compliance with the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, it does strongly encourage the programme to think beyond “digitalization or on-line delivery of face-to-face learning” by updating the design according to the latest insights and requirements of distance learning.

1.3 Public information

The EEC finds compliance with the standards related to public information on selection criteria, intended learning outcomes, qualification awarded, teaching, learning and assessment procedures, learning opportunities available to the students and graduate employment information.

The EEC has not been able to assess student progression (pass rates, tec ...) and urges the School to tighten monitoring and provide more publicly available documentation on learning progress and achievement.

1.4 Information management

The EEC finds the programme compliant with the standards relating to information for the effective management of the programme of study. Although there is clear room for improvement, key performance indicators, information on the profile of the student population, students’ satisfaction with their programmes are available, albeit not always in a formal, structured and regularly updated way. Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Findings

See remarks above in text. The EEC finds only partial compliance with respect to the standards related to design, approval, on-going monitoring and review (see also areas for improvements and constructive feedback in conclusions of this report below).

Strengths

- There is an established quality assurance procedure that evaluates the program periodically taking also students’ evaluation into account;

- The programme allows its online participants to connect with the conventional program.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The QA process could be improved by including student representatives in the process. This is a very common approach and it usually provides the committee with more insights while it gives the students the feeling that they have an important voice within their university;
- There is also the opportunity to involve external experts from the university’s network, but this is not done at the moment or is done sporadically;
- The material is adequate and the quality is regularly checked, but parts of the material seem outdated.
- Teaching, learning, and assessment procedures also need further clarifications in the public space of the university. Even after discussing for a full day, it is still not entirely clear how students communicate, interact, and collaborate within a course. Also, the amount of self-work does not necessarily explain how student-teacher interaction is happening;
- This is a case of a very small cohort. So, many services and procedures that should be there are not available, yet without a severe consequence for the students. Nevertheless, the instructional design should follow what scientific consensus is on distance learning. This includes a better virtual presence, a feeling of belonging, and resources that would alleviate the lack of physical interaction;
- Regarding career paths, improvements should focus on better connecting the students with the potential pathways. This is important for all students, even the ones already working as professionals. The university must act as an academic, professional, and social hub/accelerator.

(See also constructive feedback in the conclusions of this report below.)

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

<u>Sub-areas</u>
2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
2.2 Practical training
2.3 Student assessment

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Although the e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study given the small numbers of students, further growth in student numbers will require a more formal and better structured and adequately designed distance learning environment.

The EEC finds ample evidence of expected teleconferences for student learning, discussions and question-answer sessions, and other guidance activities including weekly “social” gatherings and face-time contact between student and teacher and commends the School for the efforts put into training, guidance and support provided to both students and teaching staff.

The EEC does, however, confirm partial compliance to this standard as the programme really needs to implement improvement measures with respect to the “future-proof” specificities of e-learning. The process of teaching and learning should be adapted and extended focusing on students’ individual and social development and requires broadening of the set of different modes of e-learning delivery, pedagogical methods and student-interaction and collaborative learning approaches.

2.2 Practical training

The EEC finds compliance with respect to the interconnection between practical and theoretical studies and with respect to the organisation and the content of practical training.

The EEC does, however, strongly encourages the School to more formally and structurally include team-work into the practical training and learning experience of the participants.

2.3 Student assessment

The EEC finds evidence of an assessment framework focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination. Assessment is consistent, transparent, objective and fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures and criteria and allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the e-learning process.

The EEC does, however, confirms partial compliance with respect to student assessment and repeats the importance of including non-individual study performance such as group-work, projects, etc as it seems that knowledge is assessed, but skills and competencies are not, at least nor formally and documented. It is not always clear whether students’ self-regulation, self-organization, presentation, reflection, collaboration, and other skills are routinely part of the assessment procedure. Since the end-product does not necessarily guarantee the development of certain skills, the programme is strongly advised to redefine the assessment procedure to take into account the assessment of skills and competencies that are part of the program goals. As a piece of general advice, curriculum alignment should be checked for all courses to make sure that the learning goals are aligned with the learning activities of a course and that the assessment methods measure accurately the outputs of these activities.

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

The programme has a clear study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide includes, for each course week/module, clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner. Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia) is adequate. Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.

Finding

See remarks in the text above: the EEC finds only partial compliance with respect to the standards related to process of teaching and learning and student assessment. (see also areas for improvement and conclusions of this report below.)

Strengths

The School is commended for its "nursing and caring" of the (small number of) students. A growth strategy should focus on not weakening this unique and remarkable strength.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Student-teacher and especially student-student interaction and collaborative learning and skill development can be further improved;
- The lectures are quite long and hard to follow as they are highly compact and cover a lot of ground. Both the quality and the integration of video lectures can be improved;
- For larger cohorts, there are several instructional approaches that would further IT (also human resources, expertise) investments.

(see also constructive feedback in conclusion of this report)

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Partially compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Partially compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

The EEC finds compliance with respect to teaching staff recruitment and development and commends the programme for its efforts to train teachers (compulsory) on a regular basis. We encourage the School to maintain these efforts and to further professionalize the Distance Learning Unit responsible for these trainings (focusing on use of technologies and on pedagogy).

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Given the small size of the programme in terms of student numbers, the number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study. Teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study and visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.

The EEC commends the programme for its “good mix” of qualified and committed teachers, well supported by a professional and experienced administrative staff.

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

The EEC commends the School for the “close-connect” and “personal/family” atmosphere among teaching staff and students. Teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad) and scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and (applied) research is encouraged. Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme’s courses.

Findings

See remarks in the text above.

Strengths

Offering compulsory teacher training on pedagogical issues is a certain strength for the program: teachers indeed need to be trained; especially in the case of online learning.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant

3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

The EEC finds evidence of pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place. Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. With respect to student progression, the EEC repeats the lack of formal documentation.

4.2 Student progression

The EEC did not see any data on formal student progression monitoring. The School could not provide directly available information on pass rates and on (individual level) progress review (processes). Student progression currently seems to be based on “keeping an eye on” individual students and their engagement with the system and assessments. This is not, however, sufficient and certainly not scaleable.

4.3 Student recognition

The EEC finds the programme only partially compliant with the standards related to student recognition. Fair recognition of higher education distance learning qualifications requires a different approach, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and including essential components for ensuring the students’ progress in a virtual learning environment. A classical individual exam is not enough to fully assess learning progress and to recognize achievement of learning outcomes in a virtual learning environment.

4.4 Student certification

The EEC finds full compliance with respect to pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification. Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

Findings

See remarks in the text above: the EEC finds non-compliance with the student progression standards and only partial compliance with standards related to student recognition.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Student progression policies, structures and procedures need to be formally put in place. Close monitoring and clear documentation of student progress is absolutely required.
- With respect to student recognition, as mentioned already several times in the above, recognition should include and cover all aspects and facets of collaborative online/distance learning.

(See also constructive feedback by the EEC in the conclusions of this report below.)

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Non-compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Partially compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
- 5.2 Physical resources
- 5.3 Human support resources
- 5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

The EEC confirms only partial compliance with respect to teaching and learning resources.

Although the standard/basic teaching and learning activities and processes are in place, the EEC finds that true distance learning (as opposed to a virtual/digital delivery of face-to-face education) requires a more broad, more rich and up-to-date set of IT instruments and matching pedagogical methods, such as serious gaming, simulations in virtual environments, interactive learning and formative assessment games, etc ... Such activities not only help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life, but are

quintessential to a distance learning experience. Further investments in adequacy of (fit-for-purpose) resources is needed to ensure for future-proof circumstances for student-centred learning.

5.2 Physical resources

As physical resources, apart from IT infrastructure (reflections included in 5.1 as essential to teaching and learning for distance education), the EEC decided not to focus on standard 5.2 (not applicable)

5.3 Human support resources

The EEC finds that human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme, given the current small number of participants.

The EEC does, however, stress the importance of up-scaling and up-grading the resources, including the human resources, needed for continuous improvement of distance learning delivery. The EEC strongly encourages the School to significantly invest in the Digital Learning Unit by recruiting a specialist/expert in distance learning technology and pedagogy.

5.4 Student support

Given the small number of students and the commitment of the highly experienced administrative staff and the continuous efforts of the teaching staff to stay closely connected to the (individual) students, the EEC finds evidence of adequate student support covering the needs the student population. Students are well informed about the services available to them and the “personal touch” to the student’s learning experience is highly appreciated.

Findings

See remarks in the text above and areas for improvement below: the EEC finds only partial compliance with respect to the standards related to teaching and learning resources.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Even though the basic infrastructure is there (Moodle, Zoom), the available learning resources are limited and could be significantly enriched. Specifically, there is a long list of PDF files and some links to YouTube videos. However, there is little interactivity (i.e., opportunity for the student to engage with technology and receive automated feedback). For example, there are no simulation, live case-studies, sandbox tools, serious games, or other highly interactive instructional tools that would allow the student to experiment, try out different things, and engage in an inquiry-based process. The interactive activities at the end of each week offer too few opportunities for such engagement as they are primarily closed-type quizzes that focus in many cases in memory recall or limited knowledge transfer;
- Since video lectures are the primary mode of information delivery, the School is encouraged to increase the production value. It is also advisable to embed interaction within the video with tools such as H5P or Adobe Connect (H5P can be added on any YouTube video and create, for example, an index of the topics covered in the video thus allowing the students to jump easily to the needed parts, quiz questions that would provide feedback and that would direct the student to different parts of the video (e.g., skip the explanation of a concept if the student has answered correctly a few questions on this topic), etc.);
- The American College is strongly advised to establish a distance learning unit with experts on instructional design and online learning. This unit should also be formally involved in quality assessment procedures,

designing of teaching and assessment methods, and be a contact point for the students and the teacher for all pedagogical issues related to the online nature of the program (e.g., advice on studying, collaborating, and working while in an online learning setting). Adding such expertise could address many of the issues mentioned in the program and could provide additional value to the whole College.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Partially compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Not applicable
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

To conclude, and to be read as the more consultative part and follow-up of the interesting, open and transparent discussion the EEC had with the American College faculty and staff, the EEC encourages the School to:

1. Update the distance learning materials, activities, learning processes and evaluation/assessment methods to truly deliver a distinctive and differentiated distance learning MBA programme that is attractive to both local (working) and international students. Ideas to this extent include an increase of the number of (recorded and/or live stream) lecture hours but at the same time shorten the duration of these lectures per course, the creation of extra interactive and truly participative live sessions with Q&A, collaborative learning activities, social and/or personal development focused events, etc ...

2. To think of ways to make the School's extensive network of business and industry relations more accessible to the distance learning students in order to really include them in the American College family and to increase the added value of the programme for its participants. This could be done, e.g., by linking the master thesis to projects or collaboration with these external stakeholders/parties.

3. To further clarify teaching, learning, and assessment procedures in the public space of the American College. Although the EEC realizes this is a case of a very small cohort of students, many services and procedures that should be formally there are not available (yet without a severe consequence for the students). Nevertheless, the instructional design should follow what scientific consensus is on distance learning, including a better virtual presence, a feeling of belonging, and resources that would alleviate the lack of physical interaction. This is a fortiori the case when the School decides to grow the programme in terms of numbers of participants.

4. To clarify and specify its Internationalisation-globalization (@home) strategies.

Internationalization requires scaling-up and diversifying the Virtual Learning Environment by making it much more than a repository of lectures, powerpoint presentations, an electronic library, etc... i.e., by adding specific add-ons to the live-stream lectures where direct interaction with students should go beyond Q&A or providing feedback. An international distance learning programme has to provide and deliver a living platform of experiential learning in which the industry and practice play an equally active role as in face-to-face learning.

5. The development of a clear strategy for the scaling-up of distance learning including necessary investments (IT infrastructure, software and human resources, i.e. digital learning experts) is required if the School should decide to

pursue the growth path of distance education. Even if the School's strategy does not envision great numbers of participants (to preserve the unique small-scale, personalized education it provides through distance learning today), updating and extending the IT structure is required for successful distance learning. Even though the basic infrastructure is there (Moodle, Zoom), the available learning resources are limited and could be significantly enriched. Specifically, there is a long list of PDF files and some links to YouTube videos. However, there is little interactivity (i.e., opportunity for the student to engage with technology and receive automated feedback). For example, there are no simulation, live case-studies, sandbox tools, serious games, or other highly interactive instructional tools that would allow the student to experiment, try out different things, and engage in an inquiry-based process. The interactive activities at the end of each week offer too few opportunities for such engagement as they are primarily closed-type quizzes that focus in many cases in memory recall or limited knowledge transfer.

Ideas to help the School further improve include making use of available technologies that allow for more student-teacher interaction and, more specifically, collaborative learning/skill development, teamwork (important for metacognition) and assessment. (See e.g. Bloom's taxonomy of learning: understanding a concept requires lower cognitive skills than explaining a concept. Therefore, students that understand the lecture will not ask a question, but if they do not discuss their understandings, they miss opportunities for further development. As a suggestion, engagement and motivational theories should inform the instructional design, especially in cases where student engagement may affect severely the learning experience. A very common approach for motivational instructional design is Keller's ARCS model, standing for Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. The model provides practical suggestions on how to increase and retain engagement throughout a course). Furthermore, multimedia design is crucial (but also expensive) and requires expertise in aesthetics and cognitive psychology. (Nevertheless, since the lectures are the primary mode of information delivery, it is advisable that the university invest in developing presentation standards that would be more appealing as these could be used in other programs as well. Finally, the length of the lecture and especially the continuous presentation without breaks for interactive sessions is problematic as studies on cognitive workload and attention suggest an effective duration of 20'. It is advisable, therefore, to break down the long lectures into mini-lectures that would be more focused and more manageable for the students and connect the micro-lectures with transitional interactive activities). Last but not least, for larger cohorts, there are several instructional approaches that would not create a higher need for broadband connection. (For example, a teacher may ask a random group of 4-5 students to keep their cameras open while the remaining cohort has the cameras closed. This will still give the teacher an audience and will create a better connection between students and teacher – even for the students with closed cameras, as they can connect by looking at their peers in the audience.) Last but not least, since video lectures are the primary mode of information delivery, the School is encouraged to increase the production value. It is also advisable to embed interaction within the video with tools such as H5P or Adobe Connect (H5P can be added on any YouTube video and create, for example, an index of the topics covered in the video thus allowing the students to jump easily to the needed parts, quiz questions that would provide feedback and that would direct the student to different parts of the video (e.g., skip the explanation of a concept if the student has answered correctly a few questions on this topic), etc.).

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Philip VERGAUWEN	Dean, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management	
Pedro DE FARIA	Chair Department of Innovation Management and Strategy, Professor Innovation Management, Faculty of Economics and Business	



Pantelis PAPAΔOPOYLOS	Associate Professor of Educational Technology (Distance Learning expert)	
Stephanie MORGAN	Professor and Director of Accreditations, Organizational Behaviour, Accreditations	
Markellos POTAMITIS	Student	

Date: July 9th 2021