

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND CULTURE
EASTERN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA**

20th to 22nd July 2009

Review Team :

Dr. (Ms.) S. M. K. Herath, University of Colombo

Mr. S. M. Aliff, South Eastern University of SL

Dr. P. M. Jamahir, University of Peradeniya



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The subject review conducted at the department of Social Sciences, Eastern University during 20th to 22nd of July 2009 under the guidance of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission Sri Lanka. Subject review process introduced by the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka and implemented through the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of Sri Lanka expects to meet the objective of understanding the contribution of a particular department in producing high quality and employable graduates through the undergraduate and post graduate programmes offered by that department. The review process is carried out according to a set of guidelines provided by the UGC and the QAA council in order to maintain parity in the QA process across departments and universities. The review was carried out by a three member review team based on the self evaluation report presented by the department of Social Sciences at Eastern University. The review attempts to recognize the contribution of the department in satisfying the objectives of university education through the aims and outcomes identified by the department and to see the factors that may hinder their achievements while providing practical suggestions that may help to overcome the existing difficulties.

The review process began as usual with a routine discussion of the procedures of the review process which helped the reviewers to recall and prepare for the protocols of the process. The review team had a brief discussion with the head of the department about the preliminaries of the review and to finalize the agenda for the review to effectively facilitate of the review process. This was followed by a meeting where the Head of the Department introduced the review team to the staff and the former Head of the department made a lengthy presentation on the self evaluation report. The review team had a fruitful discussion with the head and the staff clarifying the issues related to the presentation and the report.

The review team with the assistance given by the members of the staff of the department was able to observe facilities related to the department including lecture halls, computer units, the library, office facilities and offices of the lecturers (List of the facilities observed is given in Annex 2). The team observed three lectures conducted by two members of the department, PSS 3101 ó Political Parties, Concepts and Theories, SOC1201- Introduction to Anthropology and PHYS 4102 ó Philosophy of Religion. The team also observed presentations made by students on their assignments.

Discussions were held with two groups of students; one with the first year students offering one or more of the three subjects offered by the department, sociology, Philosophy and political Science and the other with the general and special degree students of third and fourth years offering these subjects. Since the number of students following the special degree courses was highly limited they were not interviewed separately, yet during the discussion they were encouraged to talk about the specific issues they face with regard to their education. A meeting was held with the only one member of the non-academic staff who was a trainee computer application assistant.

A variety of documents were pursued by the review team (A list is provided as Annex 4). Due to a difficulty faced by the student counsellors, the review team did not get an opportunity to meet them although a meeting had been scheduled for this purpose. The review team presented their findings of the three day review to the Head and the staff of the Department of Social Sciences and a discussion followed which was the last item on the agenda of the three day review. This provided an opportunity for the review team and the members of the staff to agree on and make clarifications on the issues raised during the presentation by the review team.

UNIVERSITY AND THE DEPARTMENT

was established on 1st August 1981 to meet a long felt need for the development of a Higher Educational Institution in the Eastern Province, Sri Lanka. Initially only two faculties were introduced; the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Agriculture which were affiliated to the University of Peradeniya. The university college was elevated to the status of a full pledged university in 1986 under the name of Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

The Eastern University, Sri Lanka was established on 1st October 1986 by a directive dated 26th September 1986 issued under section 2 of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. In 1988 two new faculties, the Faculty of Commerce and Management and the Faculty of Cultural Studies were established. The Faculty of Cultural Studies was expanded and renamed the Faculty of Arts and Culture in 1991. The Eastern University, has obtained the approval to establish the Faculty of Health-Care Sciences and the Students were admitted to the faculty from 2006 onwards. A Campus of the Eastern University functions at Trincomalee with the Faculties of Applied Sciences and Communication and Business Studies. Swami Vipulananda College of Music and Dance at Kallady, Batticaloa is attached to the Eastern University and renamed the Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies where Degree Programmes in Music and Dance are conducted.

The Vision of the Eastern University is

Eastern University, Sri Lanka to be a National Centre of excellence for higher learning and research with a competitive advantage, responsive to the dynamics of the regional and global conditions.

The Mission of the Eastern University is

To pursue excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, to offer through its management campuses and other facilities unsurpassed opportunities for education and training to all those who will be able to benefit, to enhance public welfare, prosperity and culture by encouraging applications of learning and research and to secure and administer resources to achieve these aims effectively.

The Faculty of Arts and Culture

The Faculty of Arts and Culture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka has eight Departments namely Education and Childcare, Geography, Languages, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, Comparative Religion and Social Harmony, Arabic and Islamic Studies and Four Disciplines namely Hindu Civilization, Economics, History and Christianity. At present all departments in the Faculty of Arts and Culture offer special degrees in their disciplines.

In 1996 external degree programmes were introduced by the faculty of Arts & Culture as a new step to provide its services to the community. In 1998 post graduate studies including M.Phil and Ph.D programmes were commenced in Tamil, Fine Arts and Drama and Theatre Arts. In 2005, M.A programme was started in Tamil, Fine Arts, Geography and Drama and Theatre Arts and in 2007 M.Ed Programme in Education was started.

The academic activities of the Eastern University have been frequently interrupted by the armed conflict and natural disasters that affected the Eastern part of the country; however the academic staff contributed their maximum efforts in continuing the study programmes effectively in spite of numerous obstacles.

lack of adequate space is expected to be resolved after a complex for the faculty of Arts and Culture which has been approved by the University Grants Commission where the Department of Social

Sciences is planned to be housed.

Vision

The Faculty of Arts & Culture of Eastern University will be a forum to produce scholars with action oriented with global independence and social perspectives.

Mission

The Faculty of arts & Culture will play a major role generating action- oriented scholars of versatile to the global trend, absorbing local identities, knowledge and values of the nation.

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Department of Social Sciences was established in 1991 at the *Sinhala Maha Vidyalayam* and *Uthaya Motors* in the Batticaloa town with limited infrastructure facilities. Later the Department was shifted to the new temporary building in the faculty premises at Vantharumoolai. At present, the Department of Social Sciences conducts courses under three broad disciplines; Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy.

3.1. Aims

The department has identified a number of broad aims across all the disciplines that are taught within the department as given below.

- a. To understand fundamental knowledge of Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy based on Social Science and Humanities point of view.
- b. To gain Knowledge, Skills and attitudes needed to effectively solve problems related to society in many areas.
- c. To provide Prospective Political Science, and Philosophy teachers with strong foundation that will enhance the quality of Political Science and Philosophy teaching in schools in the region and national level.
- d. To create qualified graduates in securing and maintaining immediate employment
- e. To promote qualified graduates in gaining admission and completing post graduate programmes in Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy and related fields
- f. To produce qualified graduates for national development through various programmes and projects.

3.2. Learning Outcome

However, the department has identified learning outcomes separately for each discipline coming under the department as listed below.

Political Science

After finishing the course in political science, students are expected to gain the following abilities,

- a. Understand the scope, nature, objectives, concepts, organizations and terms of government, institutions and theories of sphere of state activities in political science as a

te of utility of political science approaches concepts,
nment and institutions in understanding political event
nment

- b. Understand the scope of the study of public administration and the basic theoretical approaches in the discipline and Understand the administrative system by examining historical and current developments in administrative system in selected developed and developing countries
- c. Understand the governmental systems practiced in Sri Lanka since 1931, Sri Lanka's contemporary politics, ethnic conflict and peace processes.
- d. Understand the basic structures and actual functioning of modern governments.
- e. Provide an in-depth understanding to students of various types of international organizations and their role and significance in the modern international political system and understanding the nature of international society, and its actors and their roles.
- f. Provide a systematic survey of existing international, regional, and national human rights instruments, standards, and enforcement mechanisms, and encourage students to acquire an empirical knowledge of human rights from a political science perspective.
- g. Provide an insight into the aspects of inter-state and intra-state conflict, selected according to regions and topicality and provide a theoretical knowledge of national and international conflict, their character, patterns, and causes of their development.
- h. To train special degree students in Political Science in the writing of their final year research proposals, with emphasis on research problems, hypotheses, literature review and research designs which enable students to learn practical aspects of research and train students in the art of political science analysis and writing.

Sociology and Anthropology

After finishing the course in sociology and anthropology, students are expected to gain the following abilities,

- a. Understanding of the nature, methods and the scope of sociology and principles of social system and structure. Students are expected to have a clear understanding about patterns and social functions of elements of a society.
- b. Gain knowledge of classical sociological thoughts and classical concepts of sociological theories. Students are expected to gain clear ideas of August Comte, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber.
- c. Understanding of theoretical background of social and cultural anthropology. And providing knowledge on the scope and the nature of anthropology.
- d. Receive knowledge on sociology of poverty, work and organization, gender and inequality, Media and communication, Development and environment and law. Students are further expected to gain knowledge on interpretive sociology, Marxist sociology and stratification, social change and movement.
- e. Understanding of anthropological approaches (functionalism, structural functionalism, and structuralism) and theorizing of religion, myth and rituals. Bestowing knowledge on Caste, kinship and family system of south and south East Asia. Students are guided to read selected anthropological narratives and monographs in this regards.
- f. Understand critical thinking and relevant theoretical perspectives (post modernism, post colonialism, and critical theory).
- g. Knowledge on social research methodology; students are expected to learn methods and techniques of sociological and anthropological research. Special degree students are given training in writing research proposals and doing social research through their final year dissertation work.

causes of social problems and other structural issues and eliminating those issues. Moreover they will have an proposals for development projects and doing researches for any other purposes pertaining to social issues.

Philosophy

After finishing the course in Philosophy, students are expected to gain the following abilities,

- a. Understanding the scope, nature, objectives, concepts, of philosophy and theories of philosophy and the application of philosophical concepts, theories and approaches to the contemporary issues.
- b. Understanding the analytical skills to examine various theories of philosophy and to derive conclusions very logical manner.
- c. Understanding of the sources of knowledge and divisions of the same and then to compare with those conceptions on scientific, religious and moral knowledge.
- d. Understanding the nature of scientific knowledge and the logical basis for scientific theories and the methodologies that were used by the philosophers to enunciate the philosophical basis for the scientific expressions.
- e. Gain an in-depth understanding to the students of various philosophical schools of thought and how those philosophical schools approached distinct conceptions both physical and metaphysical.
- f. A systematic knowledge of critical approaches on traditional philosophical problems and conceptions and to understand how the critical theories attempt to present a new kind approach.
- g. An insight into the applied ethical aspects to contemporary issues like in Medicine, Business and Information technology and how to emphasis the protection of human values in all the contemporary issues in the said fields.
- h. Special degree students of Philosophy will receive a special ability to write up of their final year research proposals, identify research problems and present their ideas comprehensively by applying practical aspects of philosophy and Logic.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

Findings of the review team are presented here under the 8 categories given in the guidelines for subject reviews.

4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

The department offer courses for B.A.General degree and special degree in Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy. The department follows the credit based course unit system from the year 2000 complying with the requirements of the higher education system of the country.

Since the department is responsible of offering three major social sciences within one department total number of course units offered by the department is 78. Each discipline offers 26 course units over the 4 years including 2 foundational level course units. Out of the 8 units offered in the 2nd and 3rd years 3 units each year are made available for the general degree students while special degree students are offered additional 5 units each year. Special degree students are also offered additional 8 units in their fourth year. Moreover dissertation component based on field/ library research is mandatory for the special degree students.

given basic computer skills, and other courses such as Business and Management and Entrepreneurship. Passing the compulsory and English learning is continued over the years. The department takes the responsibility of 6 course units it offers under three disciplines in the first year and the 72 units offered for the rest of the three years for the general and special degrees.

Students seem to have provided with a large choice in selecting courses complying with the basic requirements of the course unit system that could facilitate their prospects in the employment market. However, considering the students numbers in the special degree programmes in all three disciplines which is considerably low it is questionable if such a wide selection is been added to the effectiveness of the degree programme or is it rather a waste of resources and human work hours. Rather it could have been much more useful if general degree students which are a comparatively higher number are provided with an opportunity also to follow these units. The general special difference could still be maintained through the examination process having additional evaluation components for the special degree students if necessary.

Curriculum for all three disciplines seems to be fairly reasonable for the levels expected in the each year. All the major course units expected under each discipline are offered and all major topics are covered under each unit. Standard texts are prescribed for all course units. Curricular for the special degree courses in the fourth year seems to be fairly substantial complying with the expectations of that level of study. Dissertation component in the fourth year is a strong aspect of the department. The students seem to have selected timely topics for writing their dissertations under the guidance of the faculty members.

However, certain drawbacks worth to be mentioned with regard to the aspect of curriculum for future benefits of the department. Fairly up to date and comprehensive nature of the course content is not reflected in the bibliographies provided along with the course outlines. Many of the recommended readings seem to be fairly outdated, some from 1960s and even before. Although the review team accepts the fact that classics and other well acclaimed secondary sources can never be considered outdated, bulk of the secondary readings need to be comprised of more contemporary sources.

No introductions or objectives are provided with the course outlines. No proper format has been followed in citing reading lists. Since the course outline is a public document that goes to the hands of the students, extra care needed to be taken with regard to such aspects not to provide erroneous example to the students. Many typographical errors could be found in the course outlines provided misleading the concepts, names of authors etc that need to be paid attention.

The review team also noted certain problems with regard to the course contents. For instance, the course on Advance Sociological Theory could rather be named as Weberian sociology. It contains advance material from Max Weber, but no sufficient topics included to be given the title used. Similarly certain topics included seem to be irrelevant for the level. For eg. in the course on Advance Anthropological Theory, a topic on "What is theory" has been included. This is a topic that should be taught at a beginner's level and not at an advance level.

Hours allocated for each topic need to be reconsidered according to the concepts and material that are going to be used. For eg. In Social Psychology for the topic personality 3 hours are

hours are allocated. The time allocation thus not seems
re and level of the course and the topics selected.

Course titles need to be justifiable for the level of study and the time frame within which the course is being taught. For eg. Two theory courses in sociology is taught in the second year and two methodology courses for the third year. The basic fact that the knowledge needs to be transferred gradually is not taken into consideration here. The students are expected to grasp both lower level within a subject area and a higher level in the same year without giving them an opportunity to gradually advance their knowledge.

Over emphasis in the credit system seem to have affected the curriculum. The hours are scheduled to fit into the credit system and not according to the specificities prevailing in each course. The review team felt that the problems appear mainly with regard to the two disciplined, sociology and Anthropology and political Science. The reviewers were more or less contented with the philosophy curriculum although some of the comments are valid across the border for all three disciplines.

Dissertation component of the department which is a mandatory element for the final year special degree students also need to be commented. This is a process where students need to be guided carefully. However, the department does not seem to have clear guidelines on the dissertation process nor the department has produced a formal document in this regard. The department needs to provide proper guidelines on the whole research process, formalizing the process in order to maintain the standard of the hard work done by the students.

External degree program seem to attract large numbers of students. Due to the socio-political nature of the area, strengthening the external degree programme may add both to the visibility and credibility of the department which in the long run may support financially and otherwise the internal degree programmes.

In relation to the curriculum design, content and review, the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods.

The Department of social sciences consists of 13 permanent and 7 temporary staff members. Out of fifteen permanent staff 5 are senior staff and others are probationary lecturers out of whom many are very young which could be considered one of the strengths of the department. The department has a fairly qualified and experienced academic staff including 2 Grade I and 3 Grade 11 senior lecturers. The whole degree programme is conducted by the internal members of the department, where required services of temporary lecturers are also obtained.

However, it was noted that some disciplines suffer due to lack of qualified staff than the others. For instance Sociology and Anthropology component needs more support to strengthen the programme. At the moment the programme is carried out without a single senior academic in the department and the staff should be commended for the work they do to promote and continue the programme. Nevertheless this lack of adequate staff is reflected on various components of the degree programme.

Teachers seem to come to the classes well prepared for the sessions. Standards texts are used in classes in many occasions except in instances where recommended reading seems to be

university provides books, journals and other materials. s in 3 disciplines including latest research material. e reference section. However, it could be noted that the

lending section of the library with regard to the subject streams in the department needs to be strengthened. No enough photocopying facilities were provided in the library. Library also suffers a severe lack of space which could seriously affect the learning process of the students. The Library is opened at all days of the week which gives more opportunities to the student to use available library facilities.

Presently, the department owns only two lecture rooms with adequate teaching and learning facilities, yet whenever necessary, the department shares class rooms with other departments. The class rooms are equipped with minimum teaching aids such as white boards. No facilities are provided facilitating the use of modern teaching techniques such as multimedia, normal projectors any form of audio visual equipments. Physical environment in these class rooms does not seem to be satisfactory to support a healthy learning process. The lecture halls were extremely hot during the hot sun and the teachers and the students have to walk a long way to reach the class rooms that are located in the main university premises. Class rooms do not provide facilities for left hand writers and visually handicapped students. The degree programmes in the faculty are conducted within these impediments caused by lack of facilities and teaching staff. As mentioned in the previous section the department offers a wide range of course units many of which are theoretically oriented rather than focusing on the practical aspects. Thus the course unit does not equip the students with an adequate practical knowledge on the subject or a proper job orientation.

There are not enough evidences of distributing photo copied material from the secondary sources to the students during study sessions. But also there is lack of self-prepared handouts, study guides or course manuals for the students. This could be a result of lack of photocopying facilities and secretarial assistance in the department. The department has provided personal computers for all the permanent staffs with internet facilities, yet printing facilities are not available for everyone. The only secretarial assistance available in the department is from the inexperienced computer assistant working on a temporary basis.

When observing the lecture sessions, reviewers noted that teaching is limited to lectures and lectures also were not supported with handouts. No interaction was facilitated between the teacher and the students resorting to teacher centred learning. The use of multimedia and other teaching aids was also not evident.. The lectures delivered in Tamil medium did not facilitate further reading in English although majority of the suggested readings were in English. The observed lectures however, out of the normal routine and were specially arranged for the team for their observation so that the context was somewhat artificial.

The review team observed that, there was no practice of providing the course outlines at the beginning of each semester which would be of immense help for the student to organize their time spent within the degree programme. Thus the students did not have any idea of the course units with regard to learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment methods, list of readings or even the topics to be covered and breakdown of the sessions.

There was a commendable attempt by the academics of the department to achieve the aims and outcomes of the programme. However, it was noted that the aims and learning outcomes in certain occasions were too unrealistic. For eg. phrases such as finding absolute solutions to problems, eliminating issues need to be considered. The large number of learning outcomes mentioned also could be a barrier to fully achieve them with the existing resources. In order to provide more opportunities for practical learning more field trips and industrial visits are needed which perhaps could be restricted due to prevailing situation in the area. However, reviewers felt that measures need to be taken to improve these aspects.

cludes, end semester examination (60%) continues units give marks for attendance. Continues assessment course unit including midterm exams, assignments etc.

All the course units are 3 credit units while the dissertation is a 6 credit unit. The department seems to be on par with the expected standards of the credit system agreed by the higher educational institutions for social sciences giving 90 credits for the general degree and 120 credits for the special degree.

Despite all these drawbacks students' attendance to lectures was satisfactory. According to the information provided by the academic staff, dropout rate seem to be low. However, the students were concerned about the regularity of lectures. Sudden cancellation of lectures, delayed attendance that were reported could be due to various unpreventable circumstances yet need to be avoided as much as possible to improve the credibility of the degree programme of the department. Some students were concerned about the procedures followed with regard to continuous assessments. They felt that mid semester examination and assignment marks are not given to the students on time for some courses and no comments are made on the assignments. This seems to prevent opportunity for them to improve their standards before the completion of the course.

In relation to the teaching, learning and assessment methods the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

Students are enrolled by UGC according to their admission procedures. The faculty has published and distributed a faculty level hand book (student guide) among the students. All the detail including the information about the faculty, departments, courses and course units offered by each department and examination criteria etc, appear in the handbook. An orientation programme is arranged by the faculty for the new comers and is normally continued for one week. All students who select the subjects under the degree programme offered by the faculty are supposed to undergo this general orientation programme conducted by the faculty.

Undergraduates offering political science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy follow either three year general degree programmes or four year special degree programmes offered by the Department of Social Sciences.

Reviewers observed that students' progress in each year has been monitored by semester and mid semester examinations, tutorials, term papers and presentations. The department also monitors the quality of student achievements by maintaining attendance registers and supervising students closely with regard to their assignments and dissertations and making sure the timely submission of tutorials and assignment while taking corrective measures to prevent lapses.

The department is keeping continuous attention on students' progress and achievements towards keeping up with the learning objectives of the degree programmes.. Student conformed that all lectures are available for the consultation at any time during the weekdays.

The following tables show the number of intake of students and number of students who have graduated from the Department of social sciences:

			Class	Second Class (upper) division	Second Class (lower) division
2002	06	M	0	2	3
		F	0	1	0
2004	05	M	0	1	0
		F	0	2	2
2005	09	M	0	3	0
		F	0	5	1
2006	06	M	0	2	1
		F	1	2	0
2007	13	M	0	6	0
		F	0	7	0

Sociology & Anthropology

Year	Total Number of Students	First Class		Second Class (upper) division	Second Class (lower) division
2002	12	M	0	2	2
		F	0	1	7
2004	05	M	0	0	4
		F	0	0	1
2005	05	M	0	1	0
		F	0	4	0
2006	04	M	0	4	0
		F	0	0	0
2007	21	M	0	6	1
		F	2	8	4

Philosophy

Year	Total Number of Students	First Class		Second Class (upper) division	Second Class (lower) division
2002	03	M	0	2	0
		F	0	1	0
2004	00	M	0	0	0
		F	0	0	0
2005	03	M	0	1	0
		F	0	2	0
2006	01	M	0	1	0
		F	0	0	0
2007	05	M	2	1	0
		F	0	2	0

According to the above tables, when the student intake and completion rates are compared, 100% student completion rate is evident.

In the specialization, one female student has received a first class and 7 students second lower class. Out of 47 students in psychology specialization 2 female students have obtained first classes, 26 students obtained second uppers and 19 students second lower class. Philosophy specialization shows that out of 12 students sat for the examination, 2 male students received first classes while 10 students received second uppers. A number of first classes have been recruited to the department academic staff on temporary basis.

The reviewers noted as a weakness that the department does not maintain records of their students output such as passed out graduates, drop outs, employment rates, post graduate opportunities obtained by the graduates or participation in national and international events. Department, other than regular teaching and field research for the special degree students has not introduced any activities to promote students progress, achievement and involvement. However, the steps taken by the department including revising the curriculum to meet the current demands of the degree programme can be considered as a way forward towards this objective. The members of staff believe that their students are successful in securing employment after the graduation in the government sector where graduates are given opportunities under the government graduate employment scheme in the different fields as teachers, administrative officers, translators, social work officers, planning officers etc. A considerable number of graduates also have found employment in NGOs and INGOs that rapidly increased their activities after the tsunami in 2004. It was noted that the department does not maintain systematic records of their output.

In relation to the quality of students, student progress and achievements the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.4. Extent and use of Student Feedback

The department of Social Sciences agrees that student feedback is essential for the development and sustainability of the study programme. However, the formal student evaluation system that is in place in the department from the academic year 2007/2008 is not followed by all the members in a similar manner. The department has taken a worthwhile effort to analyze the student feedback to identify the strengths and weaknesses with regard to each member of staff in the department. According to the student evaluation forms available at the department majority of students seem to be satisfied with the ongoing department programmes.

The department also adopts a number of informal mechanisms to receive feedback from the students on course units offered by the department including informal discussions with the students, assignments that reflect on teaching to some extent and class room observations and question answer sessions. The department staff discusses with the students of their problems at the end of the lectures, during contact hours and other meetings. It was observed during the review time that the cordial atmosphere prevails among the students with the staff. However, due to the nature of teaching opportunities are very limited for a teacher to receive an informal feedback.

Students through their representatives are also given an opportunity to express their views about the courses during the faculty board meetings of the Faculty of Arts and Culture. Informal feedback also is obtained through the cordial relationships the academic staff maintains with senior students of the department.

In relation to the extent and use of student feedback the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY

does not offer any postgraduate degree programs at the moment. However, some other departments of the Faculty of Arts and Culture have been involved in postgraduate teaching for a number of years offering courses including M.As, M.Phils and PhDs. Even though the department of social sciences offer 3 degree programmes involving a larger number of students than many other departments in the faculty, human resources available in the department are not adequate to begin the post graduate programs.

Currently, the department plays no role with regard to post graduate education. Nevertheless the department is promoting the postgraduate education of its own members many of whom are junior or probationary lecturers. Giving them adequate facilities for postgraduate education would be a burden on the qualified teachers, yet, this could be considered a huge benefit for the department in the long run as well as promoting personal development of the teachers.

Nevertheless, reviewers noted compared to other disciplines within the department, political science programme has more capacity to start post graduate studies that will pave the way for the other units to start the same in near future.

Due to the lack of senior lecturers no serious research culture has been established within the department. Some senior academics have taken an effort to publish their material, yet many of the junior staff has not contributed to research and publications in local or foreign journals. Due to lack of facilities, workloads and post graduate work may have negatively contributed to discourage junior staff from involving in research and publications.

It is important to mention here that the current system of having 3 disciplines together in one department seem to hinder the development of these disciplines separately. It would be better if the disciplines could be separated slowly making necessary additions to staff, facilities etc. encouraging each discipline to prosper according to their different needs. Until such time, the department may not have a capacity to introduce postgraduate studies.

The library also needs to be developed parallel to the development of the postgraduate programmes to promote postgraduate study and research with adequate attention to upgrade reading section, photo copy service, and reader service etc.

In relation to the postgraduate studies the judgment of the team is UNSATISFACTORY.

4.6. Peer Observations

The review team learnt that the peer observation has never been practiced in the department as a formalised system. It was informed that at certain times lectures given by junior staff are observed by the senior staff, however, it was noted that this could be a rare situation where a form of supervision is done on the junior staff and not a peer observation.

Informal systems of peer observation are carried out in the department. The examination of documents proved that the practice of moderating examination papers by senior academics within the university or outside is in place. More over second marking of answer scripts allows scrutinizing of marks given by one examiner which is a general practice in the universities of Sri Lanka. Yet, due to the low availability of senior staff and subject

had been moderated by scholars outside the discipline moderation of question papers. Although the review team other disciplines may be helpful in supporting the junior staff to maintain the standards of the examination papers, lack of subject knowledge could hinder the proper moderation procedure.

Departmental meetings are held to discuss various matters and staff members share their views during these meetings which could replace peer reviews to a certain extent.. It was not possible to see what has been discussed in these meetings since no recording of minutes is practiced in the department

The review team is of the view that creating suitable mechanisms for peer observation would further help to improve the standards of the study programmes.

In relation to the peer observation the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.7. Skills Development

Field research program is the main skill development activity carried out in the department. It is an opportunity for the students to develop their skills in the application of research methods and techniques they learn in the classroom, working together with fellow students and interact with the members of the community in different environments.

Dissertation writing and assignments cater to improve their cognitive abilities, analytical and writing skills. This facilitates the students to learn how to organize the subject matter and field findings combining them with their own theoretically informed interpretations.

Class room presentations help the students to improve their presentation skills although it is not a regular activity adopted in all course units. During the presentations observed students demonstrated high level presentation skills.

Other than the above mentioned occasions, no opportunities for skills development have been provided by the department. The written documents observed were merely descriptive and did not include analytical comprehension that is imperative to be developed among the students of social sciences.

The students mentioned that every Tuesday an outsider is invited to deliver a lecture on a selected theme by the department. This kind of activities helps the students to think beyond their horizons developing their critical abilities.

The department has not taken any significant steps to develop English and IT skills among the students which has become essential to meet the present demands of the employment market. There is a dire need in the department to include ways to promote IT skills and English proficiency within the curricular of the department. The course units related activities do not require students to use computers on a regular basis, nor are the students seem to be adequately familiar with web based learning. Reviewers experience with other faculties in the university is that the students (who come from same environments) have a high keenness in studying in the English medium. However, considering the nature of the subjects involved which require good language skills and ability to express clearly, bilingual teaching would be a first step towards the transition.

Even though most of the subject related readings are in English, majority of the students restrict themselves to the use the few available sources in Tamil. Despite the efforts taken by some teachers in the department to persuade the students to get into the habit of reading in

measures taken to make it an essential component in the curriculum in conjunction with English classes. Many students displayed a low competency in English language. Even though the department has not separate computer facilities to students, the University has provided computer facilities for students with network and printing facilities and student have access to this facility during weekdays. However, both IT and English are not well incorporated into the degree programmes offered by the department.

Opportunities for field base assignments are rare. Other social, cultural and sports related activities also seem to be affected with the prevailing political situation in the area. During the discussion with students, they emphasize that the time allocation for the assessments promoting skills development is insufficient. Students have very little opportunities to involve in skill development activities limiting their degree programmes to class room based learning.

Incorporating the ways to upgrade IT & English skills into the curriculum while providing necessary infra structural facilities for this purpose would ensure the high quality learning as well as the skills necessary to compete in the in the world outside.

In relation to the skills development the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling

A formal system of counselling has been established in the university with regard to academic guidance and counselling. Several academics from the Faculty of Arts have been appointed as counsellors. However, not a single academic from the department of Social Sciences is in the team of university counsellors. This is a serious drawback in the university system when the nature of the academic disciplines taught in the department are concerned where the university as a whole could have benefitted from the academics who are involved in social sciences such as sociology which directly involved with issues concerning human relations.

There is no formal procedure followed in the department to ensure the students receive necessary academic guidance and counselling. No office hours are displayed giving the time when teachers are available to meet the students. The congestion in the staff rooms does not provide a suitable personal atmosphere for a student and a teacher to involve in a confidential discussion. However, the students felt that the academics of the department are available and accessible during their needs to receive some guidance.

Nevertheless, students seem to have many problems. Students were not sure to whom to go to support when they face a problem. Many were consulting either their parents or senior students or student union members. Although the faculty has published a fairly informative handbook many students have not even seen the handbook. There were some lapses in the hand book as well. Although it provides adequate information on course units and credit system, no guidelines whatsoever have been provided with regard to the student life of the university including whom to access during a crisis situation.

Students expressed their frustration over the situation with regard to academic as well as personal counselling. They felt that even after serious issues of student suicides in the premises of the university no adequate attention has been paid to the issue.

that goes beyond the department level, students coming to the department seem to need much more support than what is currently being provided. They are unable to fully carryout their study programmes.

In relation to academic guidance and counseling the judgment of the team is UNSATISFACTORY

Based on the observations made during the study visit by the review team, the eight aspects were judged as follows:

Aspect	Judgment
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Satisfactory
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	Satisfactory
Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	Good
Extent and Use of Student Feedback	Satisfactory
Postgraduate Studies	Unsatisfactory
Peer Observation	Satisfactory
Skills Development	Satisfactory
Academic Guidance and Counseling	Unsatisfactory

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the review team the following recommendations could be made.

1. Expedite the curriculum revision that has already been started in the department. A clear rationale to be followed when introducing new course units or topics to the existing units.
2. Include a few practically oriented course units.
3. Improve the field based activities with regard to existing course units.
4. The course units conducted presently for three programmes can be arranged in a sequential manner in a way that facilitates the advancement of knowledge over the years.
5. Careful consideration of all the course units to minimize overlapping of contents and assure the suitability of the subject matter taught for each level.
6. Use more current literature in course units and encourage the students to do the same in dissertation work.
7. Establish a Departmental Advisory Committee consisting of academic staff and reputed industry professionals and get their views before finalizing the courses for the degree programmes.
8. Course manuals need to be developed by the department for the use of the students when and where necessary. It could be done either by compiling articles obtained from identified sources or by collating relevant items written by academic members of the department. This will facilitate the coherence of the teaching of course units despite who is teaching the unit.

- include the skills that are expected to be developed through important specialised courses
- monitor the students' progress and to give the students the feedback at least annually depending on the resource availability. Feedback on the continuous assessments needs to be given within a reasonable period after the submission of assignments by the students.
11. Formulate and implement a formal peer evaluation system. Proper guidelines could be adopted in this regard in order to avoid problems.
 12. Introduce an appropriate Record Management System for the department recording department meetings, student information including student achievements, employment details etc.
 13. Making the continuous assessment system mandatory would enhance the quality and skill development aspects of the programme. A variety of assessment methods could be used without overburdening the teachers in the department.
 14. Skill development aspect needs to be paid thorough consideration. This may be possible by the providing the opportunity to improve a number of identified skills by including them in the teaching and learning procedures.
 15. Devising a method to incorporate English learning in the teaching programme within the department, perhaps with the help of the English Language Teaching Unit to retain and utilize the interest of the students to learn English.
 16. Review team stresses the urgency to devise a system to properly address the student issues and academic guidance and counselling within the capacity of the department.
 17. Strengthening the student feedback procedures in the department making it a compulsory process for each course. Feedback obtained and analysed before the end of the course would help the lecturer concerned to make the necessary adjustments
 18. Gradual separation of the three disciplines into separate departments would be beneficial for the development of the disciplines in the long run.
 19. Strengthen the support of the non-academic staff is important for proper management of the department.
 20. The department needs more office space, office equipment and stationery to improve the teaching and learning process as well as for the academic development of the teachers.
 21. It is advisable to conduct short course related to all three disciplines as a beginning of commencing postgraduate courses.
 22. It would be highly beneficial for the students if discussion classes could be introduced and incorporate them in the official calendar to make it more formal.
 23. Staff in the department of the social sciences be given a formal training on academic guidance and counselling.
 24. It is strongly suggested that the department should pay attention to conducting lectures according to the schedules.

Day 1 (20.07.2009)

08.30 -09.00	Private Meeting of Review panel
09.00- 09.30	Discuss the Agenda for the Visit
09.30-10.00	Meeting with Vice-Chancellor, Chairman, Internal QA Unit, Dean of the Faculty and Head of the Department
10.00-10.30	Tea and Refreshment
10.30-11.30	Presentation on Self Evaluation Report
11.30-12.30	Discussion
12.30-01.15	Lunch
01.15-01.45	Observation Department Facilities
01.45-02.45	Meeting with Dept. Academic Staff
02.45-03.30	Observation other Facilities ó Library and Computer
03.30-04.30	Observing Dept. Documents with Tea and Refreshment
04.30-05.00	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

Day 2 (21.07.2009)

08.30-09.30	Observing Teaching (15 Minutes per Subject) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy
09.30-10.30	Observing StudentsøPresentation (15 Minutes per Subject) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy
10.30-11.00	Tea and Refreshment
11.00-11.30	Meeting with Dept. Non-Academic Staff
11.30-12.30	Observing of Dept. Documents
12.30-01.30	Lunch
01.30-02.30	Meeting with General Degree Students <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy
02.30-03.30	Meeting with Special Degree Students <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy
03.30-04.00	Meeting with Students Counselors with Tea and Refreshment
04.00-05.00	Meeting with First Year Students <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology and Philosophy
05.00-05.30	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

Day 3 (22.07.2009)

09.00-10.00	Reviewers Private Discussion
10.00-11.00	Meeting with Head and Staff for Reporting
11.00-12.00	Report Writing
12.00-01.00	Lunch and close the Programme

2. Lecturersø Rooms
3. Lecture Halls
4. Computer Unit
5. English Language Training Unit
6. Library

Annex 3. LIST OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES (MATERIAL) IN THE DEPARTMENT

- 1 Telephone line (no intercoms)
- 1 Computer for Computer Application Assistant
- 1 Computer for the Head of the Department
- OHP (not in the working condition)
- 1 Fax machine
- 1 TV set
- 1 refrigerator
- Internet connections
- 10 Computers and 4 Printers for staff use (A PC for each senior staff member, Probationary and temporary staff has to share the facilities)
- Adequate stationary available for hand outs and documentation
- The following essential equipments are not available**
- Multimedia projector
- Photo copier
- Scanner

Annex 4. LIST OF DOCUMENTS OBSERVED

- Hand Book of the Faculty of Arts and Culture
- Course Outlines
- Past Examination Papers (End of Semester)
- Mid Semester Examination Papers
- Attendance Sheets
- Answer scripts
- Dissertations
- Student evaluation forms
- Academic staff Publications