

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE



**FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA**

23rd to 25th November 2009

Review Team :

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JUSL	Jaffna University of Sri Lanka
DEPOL	Department of Political Science
GPA	Graded Point Average
GP	Grade Point
FGPA	Final Grade Point Average
CA	Continuous Assessment
SER	Self-Evaluation Report

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Academic programme of the Department of Political Science (DEPOL), Faculty of Arts of the Jaffna University of Sri Lanka (JUSL) was to evaluate the quality of education in Political Science in terms of curriculum, teaching and learning environment, the facilities available, students' achievements and the quality of graduates.

In the process, the Review Team studied the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the DEPOL and all other relevant evidence made available. An initial discussion was held to discuss the agenda of the Review Team for the convenience of Review Team as well as the Head of the Department. The information on the general academic programme of the faculty presented by the Head of the Department at the outset of the review provided a background for the review. The Head presented the academic programme, resources available and the constraints in detail at the commencement, and made available numerous documents during the course of the review process.

The Review Team visited all the Departmental facilities such as classrooms and common facilities such as library, the computer rooms located at the library building. Discussions were held with the academic (permanent and temporary) and non-academic staff separately to obtain information required for the review.

Lecture sessions and student presentation sessions were observed by the Review Team, and a large group of undergraduate students, drawn from all the students were invited for discussions.

The Review Team concentrated on the following aspects of the academic programme of the Department:

1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review.
2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment methods.
3. Quality of Students, Student progress and Achievements.
4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback.
5. Postgraduate Studies.
6. Peer Observation.
7. Skills Development.
8. Academic Guidance and Counselling.

The Review Visit was made on 23rd & 25th November, 2009. The members of the Review Team were: Prof. P. Athukorala, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Mr. S.M. Aliff, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Culture, South Eastern University, and Prof. Ranjith Premalal De Silva, Professor, Department of Agricultural Engineering, University of Peradeniya.

A large number of documents related to the undergraduate programme was closely scrutinised, as listed below:

- Teaching materials (handouts, tutorials, transparency sheets, etc.).
- Publications
- Annual reports.
- Examination papers.

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- Students' course evaluations.
- Some evidence of peer evaluation.
- Corrected answer scripts with model answers.

The Review Team made judgements as *good*, *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory* on each of the eight aspects regarding the academic programme of the DEPOL at the end of the 3-day review visit.

If the Department wishes, it may request clarifications from the Review Team or make any comment on the Review Report within a month of receiving the report. The Department is required to send a report on the action taken in response to review recommendations within one year. Finally, the Review Report will be published.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT

Jaffna University of Sri Lanka (JUSL) is one of the 15 Universities in Sri Lanka. The Jaffna campus was established in 1974 by an order made by the Honourable Minister of Education. The Campus became an independent and autonomous University bearing the name University of Jaffna on January 01, 1979.

The academic and administrative activities of the University are governed by the Universities Act. No. 16 of 1978, as last amended by Act No. 1 of 1995.

From a small beginning in the thirty acre campus of the then Parameswara College premises founded by the veteran philanthropist, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, the University has grown enormously and is today the home of eight Faculties with fifty seven academic Departments, several service/academic/support units and centers and a Campus at Vavuniya, about 130 Km from Jaffna (www.jfn.ac.lk).

The Faculty of Arts is one of the strongest Faculties in the university of Jaffna.

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3.1 Aims

According to SER report the following aims were highlighted

1. To provide skills in understanding the applicability of the present training given in Political Science to serve the community.
2. The encouragement of students to contribute in the academic field.

wing learning outcomes were highlighted

1. After completion of the degree the graduates are able to hold academic and administrative positions.
2. After completion of the programme the graduates are able to contribute to enhance the social harmony in the country.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

The department of Political Science revised its curriculum in 2005. The Curriculum has been designed including all necessary aspects of the subject. There is, however, no evidence that the department has taken steps to obtain the feedback from all stakeholders such as students, past graduates and employers in the process of the curriculum review. Probably this was due to the war situation that existed during that period. The department provides brief syllabuses to students. However, detailed syllabuses including objectives and learning outcomes are not available in the department. The review team was informed that this type of syllabus format was not accepted by the faculty. It is important to include practical components into some course units in the near future.

In relation to the Curriculum Design, Content and Review, the judgement of the Team is GOOD.

4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

The department has three permanent and two temporary academic members. There are two Ph.D holders in the department. Though the department does not have an adequate number of lecturers it owns well qualified and experienced academic staff including one professor. The whole degree programme is being conducted by the members of the department with the support of temporary lecturers. Presently, the department has some lecture rooms without adequate teaching or learning facilities. The physical environment is satisfactory for a learning process. The administrative works of the department are being carried out without a permanent computer application assistant or an office assistant. The class rooms do not have necessary teaching equipments such as white boards, multi-media projectors and audio visual equipments. Attention should be paid for disabled students in the process of teaching. Most of the courses contain theoretical aspects but practical components are not included. The review team had an opportunity to meet students and the team realized that the students are very much interested in obtaining practical knowledge.

There is evidence that the department provides photocopied materials for the students but there are no sufficient course manuals or study guides. The level of student participation in the lectures is satisfactory. The programme aims at producing graduates with skills development such as leadership, IT and communication. However, the existing course units do not address these aspects.

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) and the continuous assessments (25%) are the present .. The process of evaluation of examination papers is members of the faculty but scripts are evaluated by two examiners. The department could not obtain the services of academics from other Universities for marking and moderation purposes due to the existed war situation in the peninsula.

The main library has sufficient collection of books, journals and other materials. Reviewers found that there are sufficient reading spaces in the library. The department also maintains a small library. However, the Review Team observed that there are no sufficient number of text books and journals written in Tamil. The students also pointed out this matter. There are neither personal computers nor internet facilities for the academic staff of the department. This seems to be an obstacle for the academic members to update their knowledge.

In relation to Teaching, Learning and Assessment the judgement of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

The students are selected for the faculty directly by the University Grants Commission by using Z-core marks. The students for the Political Science special degree programme are selected by the department on the basis of the results of the first year. The students who seek to enter the programme are required to obtain not less than 2.7 GPA value or B- grade and not less than 1.7 GPA value for the ancillary subject. The field surveys are included as a part of the programme. The Review Team, however, noted that the department could not carry out these field surveys out of the Peninsula due to the existed war situation. The absence of practical exposures affects the quality of the students.

The quality of the students seems to be very good and they are very responsive for the interview of the Review Team. Political science is a subject which is relatively popular among students. The male and female ratio is around 1:1.

The Review Team noted that the attendance of the students for the lectures is very good and students are keen and interested in their study programmes. The students also understand the resource limitations and adjust the work accordingly. The M.A in Public Administration programme will help to improve the quality of the under-graduates of the department.

The view of the Review Team is that the Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements is GOOD.

4.4. Extent and use of Student Feedback

There is a formal student evaluation system. The department has taken an enormous effort to analyse the student feedback and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the academic members in the department. According to student evaluation forms available at the department the majority of the students seem to be satisfied with the academic programme. The studentsø representatives have been provided the opportunities to express their views about the academic programmes in the faculty at the faculty meetings. The department has taken measures to obtain studentsø views with regard to the academic programme of the department at the end of each semester.

to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each member back. The reviewers observed that the lecturers are also back. This will help them to get rid of their weakness.

The view of the Review Team is that the Extent and Use of Student Feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative is SATISFACTORY.

4.5. Postgraduate Studies

The department offers a post-graduate degree programme in M.A in Public Administration. This is a one year degree programme. The students are selected from different professions for the post-graduate courses by the Faculty of Graduate-studies. The department maintains the M.A in Public Administration post-graduate degree as a multi-disciplinary programme. The Review Team had an opportunity to discuss with the post-graduate students and in this discussion the Team realized that the students are quite happy with the programme.

The Review Team's view about the Post-graduate Studies is GOOD.

4.6 Peer Observation

Question papers are moderated by the senior staff members in the department. The tutorial classes of the junior staff members are observed by the senior members. There is evidence that the department practices a system of peer evaluation.

In relation to Peer Observation the judgement of the Review Team is SATISFACTORY.

4.7 Skills Development

The Department has taken initiatives to develop leadership qualities and presentation skills of the students. The students have the courage to discuss their issues with relevant authorities and find solutions. They can make very informative presentation on current topics relevant to subject area. The students are also involved in the activities of the Political Science society and it is encouraging to see the activities of the society through student involvement. The students are found to be very good in team work and sharing responsibilities. However, their IT skills and use of computers are very poor. They are not exposed to how different visual aids can be used to make presentations.

The language skills of the students are rather poor. They mainly communicate in Tamil and the Review Team could not see any initiatives in learning English. The students are not aware of current issues and matters of global importance.

The Review Team finds that Skills Development is SATISFACTORY.

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elling

iversity provide a great service to the student community.

The Review Team had an opportunity to discuss with the Director of the Student Welfare and he informed that there are nearly 300 under-graduates who faced severe difficulties due to the war. The student counsellors have taken a lot of effort to look after these students.

In relation to Academic Guidance and Counselling the judgement of the Review Team is GOOD.

Based on the observations made during the observation visit by the Review Team, the eight aspects were adjudged as follows:

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

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Curriculum Design Content and Review

Strengths/Good Practices

- Existing three senior lecturers including one Professor
- Maintaining a good library by the Department
- Revision of curriculum from time to time

Weaknesses

- The absence of sufficient academic staff
- Non-availability of modern teaching facilities
- The absence of permanent non-academic staff
- Non-availability of updated Tamil medium text books

The judgement assigned to this aspect is GOOD

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nent Methods

- The existing of two Ph.D holders in the department
- The availability of sufficient collection of books and journals in the library

Weaknesses

- Non availability of permanent administrative staff
- Non availability of modern teaching equipments
- The absence of sufficient course manuals

The judgement assigned to this aspect is SATISFACTORY

3. Quality of Students, Including Student Progress and Achievements

Strengths/Good Practices

- The adoption of competitive criteria for selection of students for the Special Degree programme
- The existence of First class and Second class Upper Division Passes

Weaknesses

- Non exposure of the students to other parts of country
- The absence of senior academic staff in the department
- Non availability of modern teaching facilities in the department

The judgement assigned to this aspect is GOOD

4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Strengths/Good Practices

- The maintenance of formal student evaluation system
- The identification of strengths and weaknesses of the academic staff by the head of the department through the students' feedback forms

Weaknesses

- No formal department meetings with student representatives

The judgement assigned to this aspect is SATISFACTORY

5. Postgraduate Studies

Strengths/Good Practices

- The selection of students from different professions
- The maintenance of the M.A degree as a multi-disciplinary programme

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1 senior staff
e persons from other Universities

The judgement assigned to this aspect is GOOD

6. Peer Observation

Strengths/Good Practices

- The maintenance of a system of peer evaluation
- The moderation of question papers by the senior members in the department

Weaknesses

- The confinement of the process of the setting and moderation of question papers only to the University

The judgement assigned to this aspect is SATISFACTORY

7. Skill Development

Strengths/Good Practices

- Measures taken to develop leadership qualities of students
- Students' involvement in extra curricular activities in the University

Weaknesses

- Lack of IT skills
- Lack of exposure by students to different visual aids

The judgement assigned to this aspect is SATISFACTORY

8. Academic Guidance and Counselling

Strengths/Good Practices

- The students' counsellors' ability to cope with the difficult situation remained in the University

Weaknesses

- Inadequate academic guidance

The judgement assigned to this aspect is GOOD

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aff members attached to the Department and one of them is serving as the Head in another Department. The Department has three temporary staff members; one lecturer and two demonstrators. It is recommended that the Department makes an effort to increase the cadre strength of the Department and recruit the staff for vacancies.

2. There are no proper classrooms available for the lectures in the Department and the facilities available in the available classrooms are very poor. Available teaching and learning environment is not very conducive and it is recommended that the Department seeks support to obtain facilities to have a better teaching and learning environment.
3. Lectures are conducted using minimum teaching aids and this area needs to be considered seriously by the Department. It is also noticed that students have not been exposed to different teaching aids that can be used for presentations. The Review Team wishes to recommend to the Department to pay special attention into these areas and make improvements.
4. It is recommended that a peer observation and evaluation system be more formalized and implemented as a regular feature in the administration of the Department. The peers can be chosen from the other Departments since there are no permanent staff members available in the Department.
5. It is recommended that more computer and internet exposure be provided to the students within the Faculty or the Department.
8. It is recommended that the students are provided with more opportunities to engage themselves in various extra-curricular activities such as sports, cultural or religious activities, etc. The work of the society of Political Science can be extended further with the support of the students.
9. The Review Team recommends to obtain the feedback from all stakeholders in revising the existing curriculum in the near future.