



KOLEGJI FAMA - FAMA COLLEGE

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Evaluation Report

2018-2019

*This document covers the period
September 1 2018 to August 31 2019*

Prishtina, Kosovo
November 2019

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1 INTRODUCTION

This evaluation report covers the year beginning September 1, 2018 and ending August 31, 2019. It remains a competitive, internationally orientated higher education institution with a solid reputation for quality and with increasing international contacts.

The Departments of the college have focused much of their attention on providing programmes that are consistent with international models, and which provide market-related skills for a successful graduate. All Faculties maintain basic quality assurance procedures, such as teaching observations for all academic staff, and student surveys, which are mechanisms similar to those found throughout the Bologna.

The continuing economic crisis in the region and the world has, however, posed specific challenges to the college. As more people face difficult financial circumstances, and fewer diaspora family members are able to submit 'remittances' to their families in the Republic of Kosovo, some students who would wish to study find it increasingly difficult to meet the cost of tuition.

We continue to offer instruction in all the centers, and to invest in appropriate infrastructure to provide students with suitable, learning-friendly classrooms and technologies. All staff are offered professional training, whether in one-hour sessions, or in the annual training 'retreat' that brings together academic and administrative staff for study, reflection, and planning. All staff also meet personally with their direct academic or administrative managers for personal consultations and specific target-setting for the next year..

Fama college also remains committed to consistent and high-quality student service. Aside from the academic programmes the students follow, the college maintains numerous methods of increasing student learning and satisfaction. All students are anonymously surveyed for their opinions about their teachers, and their general contentment with the college; these results are embedded directly into the departmental Action plans.

Despite the continuing financial crisis, and the concomitant difficulties these factors pose to recruitment, Fama maintains a reputation for quality, student service, and a genuinely international outlook.

This year (2018-2019) enrolment/application data show an overall stable trend of applications compared with the previous year. This confirms the commitment for quality and, thus, the college has continued to demonstrate a commitment to the vision for a sustainable, high-quality, internationally orientated college.

2 ACHIEVEMENTS

During the academic year 2018-2019, the college has maintained the accreditation of academic offerings like the previous years. Enrolment remained at anticipated levels, given the competition, economic difficulties in the world economy, and demographic changes in the country.

In order to provide similar practical experiences to our students, we signed relevant memoranda of understanding this year.

Finally, we have been privileged to host guests from around the nation, the region, and the world in conferences, round table discussions, and seminars. Their participation has brought their expertise to our campuses, and their collegiality and skills have enlivened and informed our discussions.

3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

In terms of regular quality structures, the management of the college has provided regular monitoring of college plans and monitored the application of verifiable quality-control data in the areas of performance management, financial audits and planning, staffing assessment and hiring processes, performance management, and academic development.

The more active appraisal system (Staff Evaluation) operated for the for all staff, with appropriate training of appraisers. The quality of the reports was monitored by the Quality Office and the Human Resource Office and a report provided which highlighted strengths and weakness, and led to training. In the period covered by this report, the Rector's management team, and every Faculty, Centre, and Administrative Department produced Action Plans to define their professional activities for the coming year. Each of these Plans was moderated and progress-checked by either the management. Each unit was asked to consult its own staff in their preparation and implementation and most did so.

Each Faculty reviewed its curriculum in line with legal requirements.

The quality policy linked directly to the College Strategic Plan and the Quality Assurance and Management Commission. The Quality Office operated and/or supported key quality processes such as teaching observation, student evaluation survey and performance management procedures, and served as operational activity coordinator. It provided key data twice yearly for Faculty/Departmental analysis. The Office also provided support in developing rules, budget, and operational structure..

To increase and maintain quality, it is recommended that the college: continues to maximize its active use of quality processes, and to monitor and report on the effectiveness of identified procedures and rules; develop autonomous quality initiatives in each unit, with stronger Quality teams and public trust bodies, especially in the Faculties; continues to strengthen its performance management processes and effective staffing (for this, the college should review all JDs and consider academic workload balance between teaching

and research to incorporate remuneration mechanisms for high performance); initiates another cycle of external curriculum reviews; strengthens use of evidenced based decision making in all areas and the effective dissemination of these; continues to strengthen student involvement in providing active input into college bodies and improve 'student life'; and maintains and improves the efficiency of our responsiveness to learners and stakeholders and compliance with Service Standards, including the general Communication Standard.

4 TEACHING AND LEARNING

4.1 Programmes and Status

All Programs offered courses in the first and second cycles in the academic year 2018-2019. Second cycle programmes have become increasingly important aspects of our instruction; several MA programmes have second cycle numbers near the corollary programmes in the first cycle. This is also important for the promotion and student recruitment, as we have developed a strong second cycle reputation.

The college also offers programmes on a part-time study basis. This proves attractive to students with external obligations, such as caring for a family member or holding a full-time job, and these offerings are improving. It should be noted, however, that there are currently no guidelines or rules specific to part-time teaching and assessment, and such guidelines may prove useful.

4.2 Student Enrolment

As anticipated, student enrolment declined slightly in the academic year 2018/2019, reflecting the financial difficulties of the country, increasing academic dispersion, and demographic changes in the population (emigration and reduced birthrates).

Academic Year	Enrolments
2016/2017	856
2017/2018	702
2018/2019	397
Grand Total	1955

Total Enrolments by academic year

4.3 Student Retention Rate

Student retention refers to the progress of the student body from year to year in the expected timeframe—in simple terms, whether or not the students stay in the college and remain on their programmes. Of course, individual circumstances or tragedies may require a student to suspend his or her studies. In general, however, a student on a 3-year, 180 ECTS study programme should expect to remain in the college for three years, and to graduate at that time.

In the table below is shown retention of the 2017/18 cohort which is 67% at the college level. This was identified in the previous Self Evaluation Report as being an unacceptably high rate of attrition.

%	Students	Retained in 2nd year	%	Retained in 3rd year	%
Total	174	82	47.12%	92	52.88%

5.30 Retention for 2017/18 cohort

4.4 Graduation Rate

The graduation rate refers to the successful completion of a student's degree programme within the anticipated time. For a 180 ECTS undergraduate degree, this should be three academic years divided into six semesters of 30 ECTS credits.

	Enrolled	Graduated	%
Total	1514	613	40.48

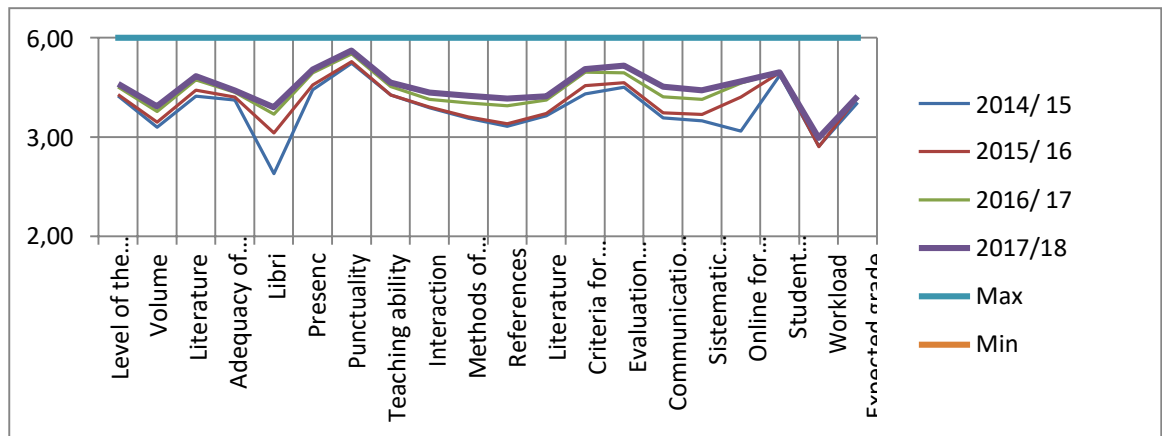
Graduation rate distributed by Faculty for 2017/2018

4.5 Student Evaluation of Academic Staff

Following regular practice, student opinion was again surveyed (anonymously), in order to obtain information about their impressions, concerns, and general satisfaction with the totality of the college experience.

This process is undertaken by a mixed team drawn from members of the Quality Assurance Office (QAO), Student Services, and the administrators. Undergraduates are surveyed in March; graduate students are surveyed in May. The survey itself is usually administered in the classroom by the administrators, without the presence of the instructor of the class. This process is believed to encourage honest answers, without the potential interference or influence of the instructor himself or herself.

The table below shows the survey results from 2017/2018 in comparison with recent years:



Student survey results

As may be seen, the general results of the survey are positive. This year represented again a slight increase in student satisfaction throughout the areas assessed. That the results resembled those obtained last year indicates a good continuity of quality assurance and instructor responsiveness. It is particularly gratifying that the students record high satisfaction in the categories 'teaching ability' and 'evaluation,' as these are important cornerstones of an open and productive classroom. Two areas that require improvement, based upon these results, are the utilization of the learning management system, and classroom interactivity.

The results from the Student Evaluation for the Academic staff were processed by Student Services and confidential, individual reports were sent by the QAO to each member of staff, as well as to the Executive Team, HR, and the appropriate Deans or Directors. The Deans or Directors then used these reports in their appraisal meetings (Staff Evaluations) with the teaching staff.

5 RESEARCH

The Research Office, is the primary organizing body for research. They seek programmes and partners at the international level, whilst also providing individual assistance to the academic staff of the college.

The Research Office does not, however, restrict itself to research projects. It also provides services to the academics by offering guidance on research opportunities, conference notifications, assistance in writing grant proposals, and the identification of authentic (or, indeed, the exposure of fraudulent) academic journals.

One other major initiative of the Research Office was the modernization and updating of the Research Database. This is the electronic record of staff conference attendance, publication history, and other information relevant to research activities. This overhaul of the system streamlined and clarified the process of recording one's research, and assists managers in assessing the work of their staff members

Although these efforts represent a significant effort to improve the research portfolio, much remains to be done. The income from research projects is still low. In the period to come, we seek to increase research activities, and to participate in successful international applications for major research projects..

6 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The International Relations Office works to promote the international affiliations and cooperative opportunities.. The International Relations Office seeks to provide numerous opportunities for our students and staff to travel abroad and foreign staff and students to visit us.

Over the year, the college has signed bilateral agreements with partner institutions in other countries. The International Relations Office continues to seek opportunities for cooperation with these partners, and to seek new partnerships and travel opportunities for our staff and students.

7 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

Fama college pursues two main streams of entrepreneurship and development: research-based teaching is one side of this activity, and the other is penetration into the economic and social life of the community. When entering into the practical business world, the college must follow the highest standards of expertise and knowledge. This approach will enable the college independently to develop its own academic plans and programmes. The ultimate target will be an increase in the flexibility and applicability of the college offering, to help the private sector in its efforts to catch up with the rest of the developed world of business. Such an orientation could, eventually, become a significant income source in due

time.

The college's entrepreneurial activities are recognized in the strategic plans. In the beginning, the income from entrepreneurial activities is intended primarily to provide financial support to teaching priorities, yet these activities should be developed to offer a significant source of income. The college needs, as a long-term entrepreneurial goal, to develop the skills, abilities and capabilities to meet the needs of the private sector. This will help the college to be less dependent on enrolment fluctuations, or on government higher education policy changes.

8 FINANCING

The college is fully self-financed. The proportion of income for the academic year 2017/18 was as follows: approximately 90% of revenues come from tuition fees, up to 5% other income (income from commercial activities, interest on deposits and investments in the capital market, etc) and approximately up to 5% from projects and donations.

Regarding financial management, we have continued efforts to achieve the college's strategic aims for safeguarding financial stability through the consolidation of sustainable resources of financing, by exploring other forms of financing, and by the diversification of financial resources.

The College projections of revenues and expenditures are planned according to the midterm budget framework. This 3-year midterm budget framework of expenditures ensures consistency of the expenditure levels within overall resource constraints, in order to ensure financial stability and to maximize the efficiency of total expenditure.

The college continues with a more consistent implementation of the efficiency criteria in the allocation of financial resources, based on economic and financial accountability and appropriateness. In this regard, efforts have been made to increase capacity at the institutional, academic and administrative units, in order to create optimization and rationalization of costs that will result in efficient resource allocation. Now all units already operate on the basis of economic and financial reasoning according to the structure of Key Performance Indicators.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) has continued to be a key priority of financial management, with the aim of providing quality financial services and complying with legal provisions. In order to be more efficient in operation, financial service standards are created, and procedures frequently updated.

9 CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES

9.1 Technical capacities

The college premises and accompanying equipment present a clean, pleasant, attractive and safe environment for students, staff and visitors. This fact is supported by the online assessments made by students and staff, which recorded high scores (for satisfaction with the premises) that have remained stable. This is the result of the commitment of all employees of the college.

In the context of planned maintenance during the summer period, many repairs were made in order to maintain the good condition of the premises. The external appearance gives the impression that maintenance is in high level and precise planning

In the next academic year, a process of assessing the full inventory of total assets will be undertaken, to assure the optimisation of costs in different areas. The further mapping of infrastructure needs to be improved, as does the system for improving.

9.2 Human Resources

In accord with the management policies for human resource development, and in the interest of improving performance management and providing equal opportunities, the college has continued to set and improve the system of human resources to support the further development of staff. The policies and procedures for recruitment, staff evaluation, and recruitment are repeatedly assessed and revised to rely entirely on merit criteria.

This year the College has addressed the issue of productivity of administration staff. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency for each work position, self-reporting of activities was conducted and monitored over several weeks. Another point that has improved efficiency is the implementation of electronic evidence of entries and exits of administrative staff, a process which has resulted in significantly reduced absence during the working schedule.

9.3 Information Systems

Being dedicated to achieving our defined goals for the continuous improvement of our Information Systems, we successfully continued to develop and advance the existing Information Infrastructure.

In order to make the E-Fama portal more intuitive we developed the new GUI, which is

designed to be used with different displays (desktops, tablets and smart phones). We also added Contextual Help, which leads to a totally new experience when using the E-Fama portal.

These improvements realized by the IT Department have proven the dedication of our College to continue to be among the leaders in implementing the latest technology from the IT field.

9.4 Library services

The library services provide full library support to all students via the electronic library. The main library on the Prishtina campus houses the primary collection of book resources. Full-time staff are always present, during operating hours, to assist circulation, provide reference assistance, offer resource protection, catalogue new acquisitions, restock returned holdings, and to guide the student work/study assistants.

The library staff have also provided training as part of the induction of first-year students, as well as training in the use of the EBSCOhost database. The cost of database membership remains a concern to the library staff; although instructors and students alike would benefit from increased access to the online resources available today, the cost of such membership is often formidable.

It is the intention of the library to undertake a serious assessment of current holdings this year, to identify outdated or unused material, and to acquire new resources that are most closely aligned with the current academic offerings.

10 CONCLUSIONS

In difficult times for higher education institutions everywhere, Fama College remains an attractive, recognized college in which to study. It remains true to the vision of the founders, and continues to provide high-quality education, to all students irrespective of ethnicity, religion, background, or gender.

Yet a serious institution must honestly acknowledge the challenges that it faces and work to overcome them. The College still remains an relatively expensive academic offering, at least in local terms, which makes tuition difficult for some families to afford in the midst of a worldwide economic depression. The College also faces increased competition. The college has seen a decline in undergraduate enrollment—largely, it appears, because of the two factors above—and each college/university has increased its promotional and community outreach efforts, in order to assist the recruitment of new students.

This report records numerous successes and accomplishments, but several recommendations for improvement are also in order. Several suggestions appear in the individual sections of this report; this list is more general, and is supplementary. This list does not catalogue nor seriate the importance of these recommendations, and it will be the work of the College to prioritize them:

- to increase enrollment of undergraduate students, and maintain graduate enrolment;
- to improve electronic resources and technologies, notably in regard to research and research databases;
- to improve alumni contact, activities, and promotion;
- to improve and broaden contacts with external stakeholders, particularly in relation to improving graduate employability;
- to increase student and staff mobility and international partnerships;
- to increase on-time student graduation rates.

Although these challenges may prove difficult, the college welcomes them, because to meet them will represent an improvement in the service we provide to our students, our staff, and the community. Fama has a good reputation and a strong commitment to the concepts. Although increased competition and the economic hardship of the world make solutions more difficult, Fama remains a dynamic, forward-looking institution producing skilled graduates and employing distinguished teachers and resourceful administrators.

Members of the Self Evaluation Committee

- The Secretary General
- Quality officer
- The Head of all campuses
- The Head of Student Services
- Representatives of all Faculties
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