



Development and Implementation of Social Dimension Strategies in Armenia and Bosnia & Herzegovina through Cross-regional Peer Learning

INCLUSION

Agenda

Draft

Twining partners:

University of Roehampton (UoR) and American University of Armenia (AUA)

Date of site visit: *May 10, 2017*

Visiting representatives from UoR:

Bridget Middlemas, Professor

AUA Participants:

Anahit Ordyan (Assistant VP)

Arina Bekchyan (Director of HR)

Arina Zohrabian (Director of Admissions)

Anush Bejanyan (Institutional Research Manager, IRO)

Ashot Ghazaryan (VP of Operations)

Chaghig Arzrouni-Chahinian (Registrar)

Gagik Gabrielyan (Adjunct Lecturer)

Gayane Davoyan (Manager of the Office of Financial Aid)

Gayane Makaryan (Grants Manager)

Hasmik Galstyan (Head of Reference/ Circulation Department of Library)

Hayk Nersisyan (CS Program Chair)

Irshat Madyarov (MA TEFL Program Chair)

Karina Satamyan (Admissions and Recruitment Officer)

Karunesh Tuli (Assistant Professor, SPH)
Margarita Sahakyan (Financial Aid Coordinator)
Mariam Galstyan (Grant Coordinator/Researcher)
Mimi Zarookian (Adjunct Lecturer)
Randall Rhodes (Provost)
Sona Shmavonyan (Administrative Assistant at Registrar's Office)
Tatevik Zargaryan (Library Systems and Electronic Services Librarian)
Tom Samuelian (Dean of CHSS)
William Bairamian (Director of Communications)

Agenda

Date: May 10, 2017

Venue: American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia

Time	Activity	
12:00-13:00	Meeting with AUA students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion
13:00-13:30	Coffee break	
13:30-15:00	Meeting with AUA management, faculty, and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of “Inclusion” project by AUA• Presentation of survey results by UoR (UK)• Q&A
15:00-15:15	Wrap up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summing up the results and next steps

[Project Name and Number: Development and Integration of Social Dimension Strategies in Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina through Cross-Regional Peer-Learning – 574139-EPP-1-2016-1-AM-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP]

Site visit meeting

May 10, 2017

1:30-3:00 PM

AUA

Type of meeting: Meeting with management, faculty, and staff

Facilitator/Chair: Bridget Middlemas (UoR)

Attendees:	
Partner	Name
AUA	Anahit Ordyan (Assistant VP)
AUA	Anush Bezhanyan (Institutional Research Manager)
AUA	Arina Bekchyan (Director of HR)
AUA	Armen Der Kiureghian (President)
AUA	Ashot Ghazaryan (VP of operations)
AUA	Gagik Gabrielyan (Adjunct Professor)
AUA	Gayane Davoyan (Manager of the Office of Financial Aid)
AUA	Gayane Makaryan (Grants Manager)
AUA	Hasmik Galstyan (Head of reference/Circulation Department)
AUA	Karine Satamian (Admissions and Recruitment Officer)
AUA	Margarita Sahakyan (Financial Aid Coordinator)
AUA	Mariam Galstyan (Grant Coordinator/Researcher)
AUA	Mimi Zarookian (Adjunct Professor)
AUA	Randall Rhodes (Provost)
YSAFA	Ruzanna Minasyan (Project Manager)
AUA	Tatevik Zargaryan (Library Systems and Electronic Services Librarian)
AUA	William Bairamian (Director of Communications)
YSAFA	Yelena Baytalyan (Project Manager)
AUA	Yelena Sardaryan (Counselor)

Minutes

Agenda item: Results of the survey

Presenter: Bridget Middlemas

Discussion:

The Grants Manager Gayane Makaryan presented the goals, objectives and outcomes of the project. After which Ms. Bridget Middlemas presented the results of the survey conducted among 10 members of management, faculty, staff, and among 50 students of AUA in March 2017.

1. The question was raised how the instruction of courses and the presentation of teaching materials can be more inclusive. Although, it was suggested (as an example from UoR) to pay attention to equal presentation of races, gender, and religions, it was agreed that such presentations may not be very actual for the country, since Armenia is mostly homogeneous in the sense of race, religion, and nationalities.
2. In general, the records on students' statuses regarding their disability, financial aid and other statuses are made by self-reporting, which means that those who do not report their status are not tracked by the University. For this, it was advised to track the students/applicants starting from admission, although AUA is one of HEIs in Armenia having disability services (providing accommodation, facility adjustments for students with disabilities) as a part of Center for Student Success.
3. It was agreed that it would be preferable to support students from underrepresented groups by different means to graduate according to University standards, rather than lower the standards of the University to make graduation possible for representatives of underrepresented groups. AUA faculty members expressed their readiness to assist in the process of implementation of such changes per need.
4. Bridget Middlemas kindly shared the information and UK practice concerning issues of defined categories of students with disabilities and policy regulation of the accessibility of underrepresented groups. She also shared her experience in accommodation and employment mechanisms of employees with disabilities at UoR.
5. It was also discussed the list of specialized equipment for people with disabilities (which was previously suggested by coordinator and EU partners). Bridget has presented in details the function of every item and the principle of application and use.

Conclusions:

- In order to improve accessibility it was suggested to develop mechanisms to track the statuses of students starting from Admissions office (e.g. registration, outreach programs)
- After completion of the project several steps from Government will be expected in direction of changing and defining guidelines/policies regarding underrepresented groups. This will particularly be a need after changes take place at AUA and YSAFA
- To define number of items to be purchased from the Equipment list, to be discussed in June
- AUA staff to provide ideas and questions to be presented during Training scheduled on June 13-14, 2017
- The overall results of surveys and site visit to be reflected in the report by Ms. Bridget Middlemas

Agenda item: Meeting with AUA students

Presenter: Bridget Middlemas

Discussion:

During the meeting with AUA students, Ms. Middlemas discussed several questions about:

1. Decisions on choice of HEI and influence of high schools
2. Circumstances where students might feel excluded
3. Main challenges/difficulties faced at academic programs
4. Communication and relationships with professors and classmates
5. Facilities of the University
6. Level of comfort in the classroom

Conclusions:

- The observations and conclusions to be reflected in the final report

Other Information

Next steps

Students to contact Ms. Bridget Middlemas for additional comments and/or questions.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a sense of belonging; feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best at work

backgrounds?

How can the university support them?

Bridget MIDDLEMAS
University of Roehampton (UK)

