



განათლების ხარისხის განვითარების ეროვნული ცენტრი
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy, Society
Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

July XX, 2019

Report Submission Date

Tbilisi
2019

HEI's Information Profile

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University Legal Entity of Public Law
HEI's Identification Code	204864548
Type of Institution	University

Higher Education Programme Information Profile

Name of the Programme	Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy, Society
Level of Education	MA
Qualification Granted Indicating Qualification Code	0319
Language of Instruction	English
Number of Credits	120
Programme Status (Authorized/Accredited/New)	New

Expert Panel Members

Chair (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Timothy Blauvelt, Ilia State University/American Councils, USA
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Ivanna Machitidze, International Black Sea University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Maya Baramidze, Caucasus University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	Gia Todua, Ilia State University, Georgia
Member (Name, Surname, University/organization/Country)	

Accreditation Report Executive Summary

▪ **General information on the education programme**

The aim of the Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy, Society MA program is to prepare specialists of social sciences with the multidisciplinary knowledge of the transformation of Georgia in the post-Soviet period. Through studying modern theories and approaches, they will develop the ability to analyse the country's political, economic and social reality, and the interrelated dynamics of change at play. They will be prepared to apply their skills in academic work and practical activities as well as contribute creatively to the development of Georgia.

The program aspires to provide students with the opportunity to satisfy the widest possible range of interests. Program courses are selected with a view to cover a broad range of topics and aspects of the transformation.

▪ **Brief overview of the accreditation site-visit**

The site visit took place on July 9, 2019 by the above detailed team of experts, accompanied by Lasha Macharashvili from the NCEQE. The team met with representatives of the university and faculty administration and Quality Assurance service, with the head of the program, the members of the Self-Evaluation Team, the permanent and invited academic staff of the program, with TSU students and alumni of similar programs, and with potential employers. The meetings were held in TSU Building 6, one of several buildings of the university where courses for this program will take place, and they also visited the university library and computer room facilities in TSU building 1.

▪ **Summary of education programme's compliance with the standards**

The program overall is in compliance with NCEQE and university standards and the committee recommend that the program be approved.

▪ **Summary of Recommendations**

Under standard 1.2 the committee recommends that additional assessment measures besides the MA thesis be added to several components of the Learning Outcomes plan; Under standard 2.4 the committee recommends that the program coordinators and/or the Faculty increase the list of organizations with MoUs for arranging student internships.

▪ **Summary of Suggestions**

Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

1. Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme

A programme has clearly established objectives and learning outcomes, which are logically connected to each other. Programme objectives are consistent with the mission, objectives and strategic plan of the institution. Programme learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis in order to improve the programme.

1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives define the set of knowledge, skills and competences the programme aims to develop in graduate students. They also illustrate the contribution to the development of the field and the society.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The program designers have outlined specific program learning outcomes, their relative values, the means of assessment and measurement, and the schedule for data collection and evaluation (see Program Learning Outcomes Assessment), as well as the skills and expertise that graduates of the program will be able to contribute to society. The learning outcomes include gaining a deep and systematic knowledge of the main political, economic and social trends and institutional patterns of the post-Soviet transformation of Georgia; gaining theoretical knowledge and understanding modern social science approaches towards political institutions and state building, transformation and political economy, civil society, and social science research methods, learning outcomes which fit the goal of the program; the program goals correspond to the mission of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences and to the strategic development of the university, especially emphasis is given to programs fostering the internationalization and interdisciplinary profile of the curricula.

Evidences/indicators

Based on the submitted documents (including the MA Program Learning plan and the Regulation of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences Functioning of 2018) and the in-person interviews, the program designers and academic staff have outlined the means through which the learning outcomes and the potential societal impact of the program and its graduates will be assessed, primarily through evaluation of coursework, the MA thesis, and employer and student surveys.

Recommendations:

Suggestions for programme development:

There was considerable discussion among the committee members and during the interviews concerning the title of the program, Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economics, Society. All of the committee members felt that the name is misleading and does not accurately convey the focus or the vision of the program (and thus, in effect, ultimately its objectives), which is centered instead on viewing politics, economics and society through comparative analysis of the Georgian case. As we are

given to understand, the program is intended not as a country study of Georgia, nor is it concerned with the post-Soviet geographical areal or comparisons therein, nor is there an implication that Georgia is in any way intended as a “crucial case study” for anything that might be defined as “Post-Soviet”. We also were giving to understand that the program head initially considered a title such as “Transformation in Georgia in Comparative Perspective,” which, while entirely appropriate in English, she found to be confusing in translation in Georgian. Regardless, the committee suggests that the title of the program be changed to either reflect the position of Georgia as the comparative focal point of the program (such as by incorporating “Georgia” into the title), or by removing the concept of “Post-Soviet” from the title. In our view, such a title change would not only clarify the course content and goal, eliminate any possible confusion among potential students (especially foreign ones), but it would also negate any possible criticism that the course might duplicate the already existing MA program in Eurasian and Caucasus Studies.

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

1.2. Programme Learning Outcomes

- Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or the sense of responsibility and autonomy, students gain upon completion of the programme;
- Programme learning outcomes assessment cycle consists of defining, collecting and analysing data;
- Programme learning outcomes assessment results are utilized for the improvement of the programme.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- The program designers have outlined specific program learning outcomes, their relative values, the means of assessment and measurement, and the schedule for data collection and evaluation (see Program Learning Outcomes Assessment). The learning outcomes include gaining a deep and systematic knowledge of the main political, economic and social trends and institutional patterns of the post-Soviet transformation of Georgia; gaining theoretical knowledge and understanding modern social science approaches towards political institutions and state building, transformation and political economy, civil society, and social science research methods, to be assessed through the MA thesis, mid-term and final examinations, employers'; surveys, and a survey of graduates. Although the committee has a recommendation regarding enhancing the learning outcomes assessment, in general the mapping and procedures for assessing learning outcomes seems standard and coherent, and assessment of the various components involves the program faculty and staff, the faculty examination board, and the quality assurance service of the university.
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Evidences/indicators

- Based on the submitted documents and the in-person interviews, the program designers and academic staff have outlined the means through which the specific learning outcomes will be assessed, primarily through evaluation of coursework, the MA thesis, and employer and student surveys.
- The Program Learning Outcomes Assessment document outlines the nine intended program learning outcomes, as well as the component/method used for the assessment, the assessment measures, the target values, the schedule, and the responsible individuals. The plan seem feasible and in line with professional standard (though see the recommendation below).

Recommendations:

Based on the interviews and the review of the submitted documents, the committee recommends that additional assessment measures, such as class coursework and term papers, be added as means of assessment for Program learning outcomes numbers 6, 7 and 8 in the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment.

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme	X			

2. Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering

Programme admission preconditions, programme structure, content, teaching and learning methods, and student assessment ensure the achievement of programme objectives and intended learning outcomes.

<p>2.1. Programme Admission Preconditions</p> <p>Higher education institution has relevant, transparent, fair, public and accessible programme admission preconditions.</p> <p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The admissions procedures are in line with standard university admissions practices for MA programs, both for Georgian and for foreign students, and with Georgian national educational legislation. The weighting of the relevant admissions components is indicated, and procedures are in place for transfer. The criteria seem transparent and fair.

The admission criteria include B2 English, a BA in any social science discipline, as well as history, economics, philosophy or law, a successful passing of the National Graduate Exams (for Georgian students), a written essay, and an interview with the admission commission.

Evidences/indicators

- English language proficiency at B2 level through university administered written exam or by recognized certificate; undergraduate degree, National Graduate Exam results for Georgian students; a written essay exam and admission interview with applicants.
- Evidence is provided in the Program description and Self Evaluation Report, and the university regulations

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

2.2 Educational Programme Structure and Content

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- Based on the submitted documents, self-evaluation, and interview results, the program design and structure is consistent and logical, takes learning outcomes into account, and details admissions preconditions and learning outcomes.
- Programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of educational programmes. Programme content takes programme admission preconditions and programme learning outcomes into account. Programme structure is consistent and logical. Programme content and structure ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. Qualification to be granted is consistent with programme content and learning outcomes
- The program was designed in accordance with TSU methodology that regulates program planning, structure, and development (decree N 153) and corresponds to the higher education's second level educational program requirements, includes learning and research components, and mandatory and elective courses. 120 ECTS are earned throughout the program (1 credit equals 25 hours): 60 ECTS - for twelve mandatory courses (4-4 courses during the first and second semesters, 4 during the third semester), 30 ECTS – for elective courses, internship, and free credits, the fourth semester is devoted to the master's thesis, 30 ECTS. The program promotes theoretical comprehension through the comparative analysis of institutional, systemic, and structural patterns of Georgian reality. The method of instruction involves a combination of theoretical and empirical knowledge within each specific area of study, grouped into the following categories:
 - Political institutions, and their transformation. Democratization, state building;
 - Systemic transformation of the economy, and political economy;
 - Civil society, social processes, values, and culture;
 - Research methods, research design.

In addition, the program offers 10 free credits, which will be useful for those participating in exchange programs or transferring from other Georgian or foreign HEIs.

Evidences/indicators

The program description and learning plan clearly outline the structure of the program and its component parts, and the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment map lays out the course components, learning outcomes, and assessment mechanisms thereof.

<p>MA Program Learning Plan</p> <p>Individual Course Syllabi</p> <p>University Regulation on the Program Design Requirements (PDF)</p> <p>Interview with the Self-Assessment Group, Program Coordinator, Quality Assurance Group, and University Administration</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>In the understanding of the committee, currently a course on economics in Georgia is a core course, while a more theoretical economics course is an elective. The committee would suggest reversing this, if feasible.</p> <p>The committee members felt that including Russian language training as an elective would be useful for the participants and future graduates (aside from the Program Coordinator insistence despite the inclusion of “Post-Soviet” in the in the program title, the program somehow does not involve the former-Soviet geographical space).</p> <p>The members of the committee also found the situation rather confusing surrounding the course on Democratization, which will be taught in Georgian, despite the fact that most of the readings are in English. The Program Coordinator argued that while the students are required to have demonstrated B2 English language proficiency for admission to the program, for some reason they might not be able to function on a B2 level during the first semesters, and at the same time the person she has planned to teach Democratization is unable to lecture in English. This logic seems contrived to us on both counts, as B2 admission level should mean B2 admission level, there are many faculty members at TSU capable of teaching Democratization in English, and the course seems rather important to the theme of the overall program. Given this importance, the committee members also believe that it is worth considering making this Democratization course a core course and offering it in English, as opposed to an elective course offered only in Georgian (despite the Program Coordinator’s insistence that the program is not about democratization, which begs the question then of why the course is included at all).</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p>

o Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- X Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

2.3 Course

- Student learning outcomes of each compulsory course are in line with programme learning outcomes; Moreover, each course content and number of credits correspond to course learning outcomes;
- Teaching materials listed in syllabi are based on the core achievements in the field and ensure the achievement of intended programme learning outcomes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- o Based on the course design and the individual course syllabi, it is the opinion of the committee members that the topics, readings and assignments are relevant to the core standards of the field and are appropriate to achieving the intended program learning outcomes. As mandatory courses the program includes courses in Anthropological Studies; Civil Society in Comparative Perspective; Comparative Methods; Democracy, Post-Democracy and Populism; MA thesis design; Georgian Economy; Media Systems in Transition; Political Institutions; the Post-Communist Ruling Class; Social Movements; State and Economy; and The Dynamics of Local Democracy.
- o Elective course topics include Comparative Politics; Critical Constitutionalism; Culture and Identities; Democratization; Economic Development; Georgian Labor Relations; Politics of Memory; Postmodern Social Theory; Project Management; Qualitative Methods; and Space, Society and Development in the South Caucasus.
- o The courses are arranged in a logical sequence, and for the most part are offered in the appropriate semesters.

Evidences/indicators

- o The course syllabi indicate specific dates, topics and reading assignments and course requirements, in compliance with contemporary university and international standards for syllabus design. Learning outcomes are indicated in the individual syllabi, which are then coordinated with the overall program learning outcomes. The Learning Plan document outlines the order of courses, their grade weightings, the semesters offered, and the planned lecturers.

<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for programme development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

<p>2.4 The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performance and transferable skills</p>
<p>Programme ensures the development of students' practical, scientific/research/creative/performance and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on the course documentation and interviews, it is clear that the programme students/alumnus will gain practical research skills through term papers and the required MA thesis, as well as through the voluntary internship opportunity. In addition to this the participants of the program have possibilities to participate in other research, extra-curricular and exchange opportunities of the TSU Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. There are also internationalization opportunities indicated in the university-provided documentation on the partner universities, as well as memoranda agreements with potential employers.
<p>Evidences/indicators</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program description, individual course syllabi and learning outcomes document provide in detail the research requirements involved in completing the term papers, course exams and MA thesis required for graduation, as well as for the internship component. ○ List of Partner Universities ○ List of the Program Memoranda
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>There are currently only three indicated partner organizations with MoUs for hosting interns. The list of such partner organizations with MoUs should be expanded.</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>It was a minority view among the committee members that the program head should consider making the internship component mandatory rather than an elective, if that would be feasible.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

2.5 Teaching and learning methods

Program is implemented using student centered teaching and learning (SCL) methods. Teaching and learning methods correspond to the level of education, course content, student learning outcomes and ensure their achievement.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- The teaching methods outlined in the program description, the individual course syllabi, and the learning outcomes document cover the gamut of oral and written exams, term papers and theses,

<p>independent work with academic literature and primary sources, interactive lectures, in-class discussions and debates, and problem-oriented learning through case studies and brain storming These teaching methods are standard for programs of these sort and are relevant and appropriate to the level and content of the program.</p>
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The individual course syllabi outline a varied program of teaching formats and modes for assignments and assessments that are specific, and that seem appropriate to the learning outcomes.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for programme development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

<p>2.6. Student Evaluation</p>
<p>Student evaluation is conducted in accordance with established procedures. It is transparent and complies with existing legislation.</p>

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- The program description and individual course syllabi detail mode of assessment that are in compliance with national legislation and university regulations, as well as international practice. Evaluated course components include lecture attendance and participation, independent study, preparation for and passing of exams, and independent research. For the standardized evaluation for masters theses see “Master’s thesis defense rules” in attachment 15.

Evidences/indicators

- The program description and individual course syllabi outline the quantitative system for assessment, the weightings for course components, the scores necessary for pass and fail and for the individual assessment ratings, as well as procedures for remedial exams. Evidence includes the “On the Approval of Rules Regulating the Learning Process at TSU, the Master’s these defense rules, and the individual program syllabi.

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering	X			

3. Student achievements and individual work with them

HEI creates student-centered environment by providing students with relevant services; programme staff ensures students' familiarity with the named services, organizes various events and fosters students' involvement in local and/or international projects.

3.1. Student support services
Students receive appropriate consultations and support regarding the planning of learning process, improvement of academic achievement, employment and professional development.
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program description, self-evaluation, course syllabi and interviews provide adequate description of student support, both from program faculty and staff members and from the services of the university more generally. During the interviews with current and former students of similar programs at TSU, it was mentioned that they often felt that they did not have such information about consultation times, although they said that they were able to approach the lecturers during and after classes and through social networks. During the interviews with current TSU students and recent alumni of similar programs, other programs at TSU have had issues with student awareness of staff consultation times and procedures.
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual course syllabi detail introductory lectures and provisions for faculty consultation and/or office hours. The university faculty as well provides support services such as the Students' Service Center, the Learning Process Management Service, as well an Erasmus+ coordinator and assistance with international exchange opportunities.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p>

<p>Given student concerns from other TSU programs, the program leader and teaching staff should be especially conscientious about keeping students informed and aware of staff consultation times and procedures.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

<p>3.2. Master’s and Doctoral Student supervision</p>
<p>Master’s and Doctoral students have qualified thesis supervisors.</p>
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program has a strong teaching staff-student ratio, and many of the teaching staff have significant experience in supervising MA theses over a range of relevant topics. The Program provides a list of possible topics for MA theses, although the program does not yet have students. In the interviews with current and former TSU students, however, it was mentioned that students of other MA programs have found difficulties in arranging consultations with their thesis advisors.
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program description and other materials give adequate details on the requirements for the MA thesis and its supervision, prospective topics for the MA theses, the Regulation for the MA Dissertation of December 2018, as well as the qualifications of the teaching staff to provide such supervision.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>

<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>In speaking with current TSU students and recent alumni of other programs, it was brought to our attention that in other programs at the university there have been issues in which MA students found it difficult to arrange for consultations with their MA thesis advisors. The committee therefore suggests that the program leader and other staff be conscious of the fact that this has been a problem in other programs at TSU and that they make their best efforts to assure supervisor availability for this program.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Student achievements and individual work with them	X			

4. Providing teaching resources

Programme human, material, information and financial resources ensure programme sustainability, its effective and efficient functioning, and achievement of intended objectives.

4.1 Human Resources

- Programme staff consists of qualified people who have necessary competences in order to help students achieve programme learning outcomes;
- The number and workload of programme academic/scientific and invited staff ensures the sustainable running of the educational process and also, proper execution of their research/creative/performance activities and other assigned duties. Balance between academic and invited staff ensures programme sustainability;
- The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation;
- Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff of appropriate competence.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- The faculty and this specific program makes use of a strong contingent of academic and support staff members who are sufficiently accredited, experienced and respected in their fields.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

As this MA program's main goal is designing the innovative interdisciplinary curriculum with the focus on Georgia from the political, economic and social perspectives, the qualifications of the affiliated and invited staff of the program satisfy the requirements to ensure the successful implementation of its objectives and learning outcomes. Based on the submitted information on the personnel qualifications, the Program Staff exhibits a sufficient educational and research background (including publications) in Political Science, Sociology, Journalism, Law and Geography in order to ensure the interdisciplinary character of the program.

The number of the teaching staff involved in the Program comprises 8 affiliated academic staff, among them 4 full Professors, 4 Associate Professors as well as 8 invited staff (among them 1 invited foreign lecturer).

What concerns the staff/students ratio, the University documentation gives information on the number of the Administrative and Teaching Staff Required for the Program's Successful Implementation.

The Calculations are carried out in the following manner:

- a) program profile and specifics;
- b) number of students;
- c) planned number of students to be received;
- d) number of academic and research Staff with the appropriate qualifications;
- e) leading universities' experience.

As visible from the surveys carried out among the affiliated and invited staff, the 60% of the academic personnel require the revision of their workload, which should be taken into account by the University and Faculty Administration for further consideration.

With regards to the provision of adequate administrative and support staff of appropriate competence, the interviews with the students' group in the framework of the site visit revealed their overall satisfaction with the involvement, availability, and readiness to assist the students of the Faculty program staff. At the same

time, the students pointed out a high level of bureaucracy and, at times, a lengthy decision-making process. Frequently when they are not satisfied with the lecturers' performance, they would rather write petitions and hand them to a trusted lecturer or administrative staff member rather than inform the Quality Assurance Staff of the Faculty about the problem.

As the interviews with the Program Coordinator demonstrated, she was personally involved in the program design, curriculum development as well as communication with stakeholders. The documents as well as the interviews demonstrate that the Head of the Program possesses necessary skills and competences for its effective supervision.

Based on the documentation provided by the University, the Academic Staff performance is evaluated through the Staff Self-evaluation form, including such components as educational process workload (comprising lectures, practice/lab assignments, internship, thesis supervision etc.) and related tasks to be fulfilled (syllabi design and update, preparation for classes, using electronic resources – Moodle platform); preparation for midterm and final exams; internship supervision; courses delivered abroad; journal articles; published books/monographies; chapter in a book; conference proceedings; patents, research grants/ project participation; research events' participation; creative activities etc.

The self-assessment form allows to adequately evaluate the academic staff as well as the invited staff performance/workload and determine the paths for further development.

With the view to develop the competences of the staff involved in program functioning, the Tempus project carried out in partnership with the Georgian-American University and Caucasus University aims at increasing post-Soviet Transformations program staff's field-specific competences through visits to the European HEIs (e.g. "State and Economy: a Sociological Perspective", "Labour Relations in Georgia in the Context of the EU Integration"). Various trainings, conferences and projects are carried out with the view to increase the expertise of the invited and affiliated staff which is confirmed by the University-provided documentation.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the systematic character of the program staff's competences development, University and Faculty Quality Assurance Office participates along the Educational Process Supervision Department. Judging from the documentation provided by the University, three trainings on the quality assurance were carried out in order to increase the competences of the self-evaluations group on the goals and learning outcomes design according to the new Accreditation standards.

Trainings on academic honesty are also held on a regular basis for the teaching personnel of the program.

Evidences/indicators

- The Personnel Evaluation Regulation (81-2018 personalis shefasebis wesi.pdf)
- Determining the Number of Program Staff Necessary for the Program Implementation (Attachment 1, pdf)
- Academic and invited staff personal folders (including CVs, diplomas, list of relevant publications and labour contracts);
- Self-Evaluation Report (English/ Georgian version, pdf);
- Report on the events carried out with the view to enhance academic, research and invited staff competences (pdf file);
- The MA Program Learning Plan (pdf);
- Foreign Experts' Recommendation/Evaluation Letters (Vrije University Brussels, INALCO Paris, Graduate Institute Geneva);
- The Self-Evaluation Group Meeting Report, "Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy and Society" MA Program (19.01.2019), Minutes # 2.
- Report of the Outcomes of the University Academic Staff Survey (pdf);
- Report of the Outcomes of the University Students' Survey (pdf);

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews held during the site visit
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for programme development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements</p>

<p>4.2 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ HEI conducts the evaluation of programme academic, scientific and invited staff and analysis evaluation results on a regular basis; ➤ HEI fosters professional development of the academic, scientific and invited staff. Moreover, it fosters their scientific and research work.
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <p>The university and the faculty provide evaluation and professional development opportunities for academic, scientific and invited staff which are on par with, and perhaps the most comprehensive, among all of the universities in the country.</p> <p>The TSU Quality Assurance staff explained during the interview that the development of policies for academic development, recruitment, evaluation, and development are under way. Evaluation of staff process began</p>

recently for academic and administrative staff, there is currently a pilot and the system of evaluation is being restructured. The university also has various support services, and the university contributes to financing publishing projects and conference participation, as well as professional development of training, that concerns teaching methodology, learning outcomes, trainings, so far this year there have been 8 trainings concerning issues of program design and learning outcomings, also writing, teaching and learning. From next week the university is opening a center for teaching and learning, supporting academic and invited staff,

The faculty administration representative emphasized that the faculty has reshuffle its budget in order to provide two grant competitions every year, one for research, one for textbook writing. Every year professors may apply for research that is relevant, and for textbooks that are relevant. Every year 3-4 research projects, this year 5 text books. We include students' input. Last year we did interesting research in applicability of idea of blue economy, huge ongoing work = how it can be applied to current Georgian reality. We did textbook on human geography.

The university administration representative added that in addition to the faculty budget, the university itself also provides resources to provide for conference participation and research support.

Evidences/indicators

The Academic and Affiliated Staff Questionnaires

Interviews with the Faculty Administration, Quality Assurance staff, and the Academic and Invited Personnel

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

o Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- X Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

4.3. Material Resources

Programme is provided by necessary infrastructure and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- o The Post-Soviet Transformation MA Program has been allocated sufficient provision of the material and technical resources necessary for implementing a curriculum aimed at offering a high-quality study process with innovative methodological approaches and research opportunities for its students as well as for the staff involved.
- o The university possesses necessary reading materials required for the implementation of the program which is confirmed by the report (see Evaluation Indicators);
- o The University premises offer rooms for lectures in different University buildings (primarily in buildings 1, 2, 4 and 6), most rooms are equipped with the outlets necessary for using laptops during classes, although not all classrooms are equipped with projectors and computers;
- o The University library located in the 1st Building of the University offers a wide variety of books and journal articles both in English and Georgian (as well as other languages). There is also an area for the students to study and have access to computers.
- o The Faculty of Political and Social Sciences hosts a separate study space for students in need of statistical programs. The programs which are not installed at the computers can be installed upon student's request (both at the Faculty and in the University libraries).
- o The Library provides access to the numerous electronic databases (Elsevier SCOPUS, Elsevier Science Direct, EBSCOHost, JSTOR), where students and program teaching staff can make use of the articles available in the field of their interest. The university library is equipped with an online catalogue and other online services.
- o The above-mentioned information was confirmed by a survey carried out among the academic staff of the program, in which the library and access to the variety of resources was especially pointed out as a positive development.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the same time, university infrastructure turned out to be a more problematic issue (specifically, the conditions of rooms, labs, recreational areas). 52.4% of the academic staff emphasized the outdated material-technical resources provision. In the student questionnaires, 52,2% of respondents fully disagree with the adequate provision of material and technical resources. ○ At the same time, out of a maximum of 4 points, the students allocated 3 and 3.33 respectively to the availability of books and electronic resources in the library. This indicator demonstrates the highest degree of approval among the others concerning the services provision at the University. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What should also be emphasized, the questionnaire concerns the university-wide level of satisfaction, which might not be fully representative of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, which should be taken into consideration.
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Site Visit at the University Premises (lecture rooms, the University and Faculty Library); ○ The Program Self-Evaluation Report (English/Georgian version pdf); ○ Library reports on books purchase for the courses envisaged by the Post-Soviet Transformations Program (pdf file); ○ Report on the Outcomes of the University Academic Staff Survey (pdf); ○ Report on the Outcomes of the University Students' Survey (pdf).
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>The University and Faculty of Social and Political Sciences infrastructure improvement should become one of the foremost priorities for the Program material and technical resources adequate provision.</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provision of resources (their accessibility and variety) at the University Library.
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p> <p>○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements</p>

- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

4.4. Programme/faculty/school budget and programme financial sustainability

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to programme needs.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

The proposed financial plan of MA programme “Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy, Society” forms part of the overall Faculty budget for 2019. The development of the budget is centralized in the University and it provides the program with the necessary material and technical resources. The budget also provides for the Faculty library supplement with a new books; access to international electronic resources; staff compensation and travel expenses; facilities for research activities and the publication of academic articles and papers.

The financial sustainability of the MA program is provided by the revenue received from the University's educational and other activities and is reflected in the program's financial plan.

It should be mentioned that the MA Programr intends to recruit 20 students for the 2019-20 academic year. The income received from these students will primarily cover direct payments, such as salaries of the academic and invited staff. This income is sufficient to cover only 65.7% of the budget expenditures, which will make it difficult to ensure the financial sustainability of the programme at this first stage and in the short term.

Evidences/indicators

- The “Post-Soviet Transformation: Politics, Economy, Society” MA program budget (Georgian. xlsx)
- The Faculty of Social and Political Sciences budget (Georgian. xlsx)
- The Self-evaluation report (English/Georgian. pdf);
- Interviews during site visit with the program Coordinator, the university administration and quality control, and the academic staff.

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards
Suggestions for programme development: Non-binding suggestions for programme development
Best Practices (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard <p style="margin-left: 40px;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Substantially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Partially complies with requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Does not comply with requirements </p>

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Providing teaching resources	X			

5. Teaching quality enhancement opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilizes internal and external quality assurance services and also periodically conducts programme monitoring and programme review. Relevant data is collected, analysed and utilized for informed decision making and programme development on a regular basis.

5.1 Internal quality

<p>Programme staff collaborates with internal quality assurance service(s) available at the higher education institution when planning the process of programme quality assurance, creating assessment instruments, and analysing assessment results. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.</p>
<p>Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements</p> <p>Based on the Internal quality assurance process described in self-evaluation report and the active involvement of the university Quality Assurance service during the site visit process and interviews, it is clear that the program developers work closely with quality evaluation service. TSU Quality Assurance works through a procedure of 1. Program design and approval, 2. Program implementation, 3, monitoring, evaluation and analysis, and 4. Program modification. According to the university regulations, program evaluation is performed by the university QA service of the faculty under the supervision of the TSU Quality Assurance Department.</p>
<p>Evidences/indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The TSU Quality Assurance Service seems to be highly developed, and the collaboration between the university quality assurance service and the program leader and staff is clearly demonstrated in the program materials and by their combined efforts during the site visit. The Quality Assurance Service is involved with the evaluation of the program and the syllabus and the internal program approval, as well as program implementation and development. The Service also works conscientiously to be in full compliance with the standards of the National Quality Assurance requirements, and to provide training and consultation for university staff to help them to understand these standards and to design their course offerings appropriately. Evidence includes the Decree of the TSU Academic Council of December 8, 2017 “Instruction on the planning, approval, and development of programs and its amendments,” and the Instrument for Quality Assurance.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards</p>
<p>Suggestions for programme development:</p> <p>Non-binding suggestions for programme development</p>
<p>Best Practices (if applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes
<p>In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)
<p>Evaluation</p>

o Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

5.2 External quality

Programme utilizes the results of external quality assurance on a regular basis.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

In addition to the procedures of the National Quality Assurance process, the program leader has submitted the syllabi for consideration, comment and improvement to European colleagues, and has also made use of the involvement of the foreign professor who will teach for the course, Evelyn Baumann, which is a positive step in providing outside feedback as a means of external quality assurance. Such consultation is useful for the development of the program, both in providing additional feedback and in helping to align the program design with international standards.

Evidences/indicators

- o Component evidences/indicators including relevant documents and interview results

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- o Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- o Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

o Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review

Programme monitoring and periodic review is conducted with the involvement of academic, scientific, invited, administrative staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders through systematically collecting and analysing information. Assessment results are utilized for programme improvement.

Descriptive summary and analysis of compliance with standard requirements

- o The program will make use of means of evaluation and assessment that are in line with university and national practices. Program monitoring and periodic review is handled by the Faculty Quality Assurance Service. IN addition to this review will be conducted by the head of the program and the self-evaluation team. Direct and indirect indicators for assessment of program and participant success and their means of evaluation are included in the learning outcomes evaluation. Periodic meetings of lecturers and staff are also planned in order to utilize assessment results for further improvement of the program.

Evidences/indicators

- o In addition to the course and thesis assessments included in the program description and the individual course syllabi, according to the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment the program managers will make use of an employers' survey and student employment data, as well as a post-program survey of recent graduates. Potential employers were involved in the drafting of the program and the self-evaluation, and several of them also made themselves available for interviews during the site visit.

Recommendations:

Proposal(s), which should be considered by the institution to comply with requirements of the standards

Suggestions for programme development:

Non-binding suggestions for programme development

Best Practices (if applicable):

- o Practices, which prove to be exceptionally effective and which may become a benchmark or a model for other higher education programmes

In case of accredited programme, significant accomplishments and/or progress

- Significant accomplishment and/or progress made by the programme after previous accreditation (If Applicable)

Evaluation

○ Please mark the checkbox which mostly describes your position related to the programmes compliance with this specific component of the standard

- Complies with requirements
- Substantially complies with requirements
- Partially complies with requirements
- Does not comply with requirements

Programme's Compliance with Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
Teaching quality enhancement opportunities	X			

Enclosed Documentation (If Applicable)

HEI's Name:

Higher Education Programme Name:

Number of Pages of the Report:

Programme's Compliance with the Standard

Standard	Complies with Requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially Complies with Requirements	Does not Comply with Requirements
1. Programme objectives are clearly defined and achievable; they are consistent with the mission of the HEI and take into consideration labour market demands	X			
2. Teaching methodology and organization, adequate evaluation of programme mastering	X			
3. Student achievements and individual work with them	X			
4. Providing teaching resources	X			
5. Teaching quality enhancement opportunities	X			

Expert Panel Chair's

Name, last name, signature: Timothy K. Blauvelt, Ilia State University and American Councils



Expert Panel Members'

Name, last name, signature: Ivanna Machitidze, International Black Sea University



Name, last name, signature: Maya Baramidze, Caucasus University

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Name, last name, signature: Gia Todua, Ilia State University

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Todua', written in a cursive style.