

The first English 4-year undergraduate program welcomes 28 students from 10 countries

On Wednesday, September 30th 2020, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and its School of Philosophy organized the welcoming ceremony for 28 students of the first four-year undergraduate program taught in English: "BA Program in the Archaeology, History, and Literature of Ancient Greece ", which is addressed exclusively to foreign students. The event took place in the Great Hall of the National and Kapodistrian of Athens. Students from Albania, Canada, China, Egypt, El Salvador, Kenya, Morocco, Palestine, United Arab Emirates and United States of America joined the University's international students' community which already numbers 7,600 international students registered in undergraduate or postgraduate programs of the NKUA.

Earlier, the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Niki Kerameus, together with the Rector of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Professor M.-A. Dimopoulos and the Academic Director of the program, Professor Eleni Karamalengou, had the opportunity to welcome the students in section groups due to special pandemic protective measures. Rector Dimopoulos' welcomed the students and pointed out that *" a University's leading role shall be safeguarded by a constant engagement to innovation, creativity and excellence. Therefore, it came as no surprise that this first English undergraduate program at a Greek University is offered by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens... "*. Minister Kerameus then stressed on the fact that *"The Greek Government, the Ministry of Education and I, personally, strongly support the value of fostering an educational system that is extroverted and internationally minded. This is particularly true for institutions of higher education, whose structure and student population make them optimally positioned for international collaborations"*.



The ceremony was streamed live for students who had not yet arrived in Athens, as well as for all students' parents, relatives and friends.

Subsequently, the students attended an introductory course which begun with welcoming addresses by Rector, Professor M.-A. Dimopoulos, the Dean of the School of Philosophy,

Professor A. Chaldeakis and the Academic Director of the program, Professor E. Karamalengou.

As Rector M.-A. Dimopoulos mentioned “internationalization has been a cornerstone goal of the ten-year strategic plan of our University and today internationalization is perhaps more important than ever. The challenges we face cannot be solved by one person or one nation alone, but we need to stand together. We are rewarded today, because you have selected to trust us in this new program. For the year 2020 the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens has been ranked 79th in the world by the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking for its "Quality in Education" and the subject of Archaeology is highly ranked by QS”.

Dean A. Chaldeakis mentioned that the School of Philosophy welcomes a large number of under- and postgraduate foreign students every year and we really enjoy the interaction with students whose life experiences, opinions, customs and personal lifestyles differ from our own. Although there are restrictions now because of the pandemic, he wished them that *“in the years to come, I am sure you will be able to enjoy full access to what our School has to offer to you, including our amazing music and cultural events”*.

Professor E. Karamalengou then explained in detail the program and that it was created from scratch, in such a way as not to replicate, imitate or translate similar programs which already exist in Greece or elsewhere. She pointed out that *“This program gives you the unique opportunity of studying in the country where the Greek civilization was born, combining instruction in the class with instruction on-site, close to the monuments and the places where the traces of this civilization can be found. You will study the Ancient Greek culture in today’s Greece, immersed in the remains of the Ancient world”*.

A short video displaying the history of the NKUA since its foundation in 1837, was screened and the course continued by orientation speeches on each of the three disciplines that the program successfully combines - Archaeology, History and Philology - by the Associate Professor of Prehistoric Archeology of the Department of History and Archaeology, Georgios Vavouranakis, the Professor of Ancient History from the Department of History and Archaeology Eleni Psoma, the Assistant Professor of Classics Aikaterini- Nina Carvounis, respectively. Specific guidelines were finally given to the students by the Secretary of the program and Doctor of Prehistoric Archaeology Dionysia Marinou.



The international orientation of the NKUA, the extroversion and experience gained by the growing number of foreign students studying at NKUA, contributed to the introduction of the "BA program in Archaeology, History, and Literature of Ancient Greece". The program was established by two laws published in the Greek Government Gazette 2464B '21.06.2019, and the Greek Government Gazette 2979B' 19.07.2019 respectively, after a two-year preparation. The Program is dedicated to the study of Archaeology, Ancient History, Ancient Greek Philology and Classical Greek culture in general, throughout the 32 courses of its curriculum and in combination with educational visits to archaeological sites and other sites of cultural interest. Students will have the opportunity to investigate the forces that led to the survival of the Greek civilization and Greek literature, and among others, they will focus on the interaction between Greek and Roman literature and civilization, which facilitated the dissemination of the Greek culture in the European West. They will obtain a degree with direct benefits in the labor market and unlock diverse career paths by gaining a versatile assortment of skills, including creativity, critical thinking, research, problem-solving, and communication.

Except from the students who have been selected for the entire 4-year program, foreign University students have been accepted to study for one year. For the academic year 2020-21 students from the Southwest University of China (SWU) have joined for one-year studies in the framework of bilateral cooperation agreement between NKUA and SWU. Similar opportunities are under discussion with other partner Universities. Furthermore, as Rector Dimopoulos announced, there is already a considerable number of applications by potential students to join the 4-year program next year.

The event and the first introductory lesson ended with the delivery of souvenirs to the students.



(For further information, please visit : <https://baag.uoa.gr/>).