



September 9, 2011

Ms. Michal Neuman - Head
The Quality Assessment and Assurance Unit
The Council for Higher Education

Response to the quality assessment report of the program in Public Policy and Administration at Sapir College

1. We thank the committee for its work and for its enlightening report.
2. We welcome the committee's recognition of the importance of the undergraduate program in the field of Public Policy and Administration; a program that Sapir was the first in Israel to establish at the undergraduate level.

We appreciate the distinction that the committee makes between the undergraduate level program in Public Policy and Administration and programs at the graduate level. This distinction enables the undergraduate program to offer a challenging combination of Liberal Arts and studies in Public Policy and Administration.

We draw great satisfaction from the committee's impressions of our program and the full devotion of the department's teaching staff.

3. We fully accept all of the recommendations made by the committee regarding the undergraduate program which it had been asked to evaluate.
4. Because of insights gained from the self-evaluation report which was written earlier, the department had already begun to take steps that are consistent with the committee's findings and recommendations. The following changes have already been introduced towards the coming academic year:
 - a) The addition of an economist as a permanent member of the department's staff. The economist will be responsible for developing courses in economics that are relevant to a course of study in Public Policy and Administration;



- b) The department's curriculum was changed to increase the number of elective courses directly related to studies in Public Policy and Administration;
 - c) An elective course in political science was added;
 - d) An elective course in policy analysis was added. It will become a mandatory course in the future. The course focuses mainly on the quantitative aspects of policy analysis;
 - e) A final-year project on the subject of e-government, which will combine knowledge in the fields of public policy and administration, and political science has been added;
 - f) The required course "Psychology of Decision-Making" was changed to "Decision-Making". The new course emphasizes a quantitative orientation in accordance with the committee's recommendations to incorporate quantitative reasoning in the curriculum;
 - g) Courses in the field of economics have undergone a comprehensive reworking so that they will fit the requirements for a program of study in Public Policy and Administration. The emphasis is on a shift to the development of quantitative abilities for understanding theories and processes in the field of Public Economics;
 - h) The department's pedagogic committee has decided to examine the syllabus of each course in the department in order to ensure a greater focus on Public Policy and Administration. The syllabi are currently under scrutiny, and recommendations for change will be implemented in the coming academic year.
5. Along with these changes, the department's academic staff met on July 25, 2011, after reading the committee's report and its recommendations. The following decisions were taken:
- a) The teaching committee will be extended to include an economist.



- b) The incoming department head, together with the teaching committee, will make the necessary changes and alterations stipulated in the report.
 - c) The department's academic staff will be kept abreast of the progress of the pedagogic committee, and will advise it regarding its work in implementing the committee's recommendations.
6. We choose not to comment on the committee's remark on the master's program. In our view the two programs mutually benefit each other; one benefit being an improvement in teaching quality in both the programs. Since the students that are accepted into the master's program come from varying disciplines (economics, behavioral sciences, history, etc.) and institutions, we do not believe that there is need to tie together the structure of the undergraduate program with the existence of the graduate program.

With highest regards,

Prof. Jimmy Weinblatt

President