

October 22,2012

Att:

Committee for the Evaluation of Sociology and Anthropology Study Programs.

Dear committee members,

We received your Evaluation Report of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, drafted in August. We would like to thank you wholeheartedly for the time you devoted to meetings with the faculty and the tour of the campus, and for the opportunity to conduct a series of meetings on the department's functions in anticipation of the committee's visit. It is unnecessary to state that these meetings took place in addition to the ongoing reviews and annual evaluations we perform at the end of every academic year in order to assess the program.

Following are a series of clarifications that are necessary in view of the committee's recommendations on page 9 of the Evaluation Report. Our clarifications also include the original comment number in the Report.

*1. It emerges from the Evaluation Report that the various options available to the program's students were not completely clarified to the committee. We are sorry about this because the issue is simple. Students have two basic options: (1) to study in a dual-major program (such as Sociology-Anthropology and psychology; Sociology-Anthropology and criminology; Sociology-Anthropology and communications, etc.). In this format, students gain an equal number of credits for their degree in both programs. (2) to study in two programs – one of which is Sociology-Anthropology and second is the Multi-Disciplinary Department.

This model is not unique to the Ariel University Center. In fact it has been operating for several years at the Faculty of Humanities at Tel Aviv University, where students can structure a BA program based on any topic as a dual-major program, and add classes selected from the Multi-Disciplinary Department.

Ariel University Center does not limit students who select a combination of Sociology-Anthropology and a mini-program from within the Multi-Disciplinary Department, although it recommends (and this is only a recommendation) students to select human resources and psychology, because such a combination covers the field of organizational sociology and makes it easier for them to continue to a master's degree in this field, or gives them a more favorable starting point in the job market.

- Another point in this context, which appeared to be organizationally complex to the committee (page 6 of the Report) is the fact that Sociology-Anthropology is concurrently taught in several formats: (a) full format of 60 credits, within the Sociology-Anthropology program; (b) 20 credits in Behavioral Sciences, as an integral part of the studies of the students in this department; (c) 30 credits or 20 credits, at the student's election) in the Multi-Disciplinary Department.

This model is certainly not unique to Ariel. It is prevalent in Israel's higher education institutions. For example, at the Kineret College, students can study Behavioral Sciences, which include a significant component in sociology. In addition to Behavioral Sciences, students there can study Sociology-Anthropology as a BA program. In addition to these, the college also offers a multi-disciplinary program, which also offers Sociology-Anthropology. The College of Western Galilee has a Sociology-Anthropology department, and students can also study Sociology-Anthropology in the Multi-Disciplinary Department. Ben Gurion University operates a Behavioral Sciences department that also offers sets of classes in psychology and in Sociology-Anthropology. At the same time, the university also has a department of Sociology-Anthropology and a department of psychology. This description is not exhaustive – it is repeated in additional institutions as well.

It should be noted that students at Ariel can earn a BA in Sociology-Anthropology only in the Sociology-Anthropology department. The fact that students can take groups of classes in Sociology-Anthropology in other departments is not considered competition. The only place in our institution where students previously studied Sociology-Anthropology at a scope of 60 credits was the Multidisciplinary Program. This format was cancelled when the department of Sociology-Anthropology was

established. For several years there has been no competition between Ariel's various departments over Sociology-Anthropology.

Finally, it should be clarified to the committee that the department of Sociology-Anthropology is responsible for all the groups of classes in Sociology-Anthropology at Ariel. This department develops the programs and supplies the instructors.

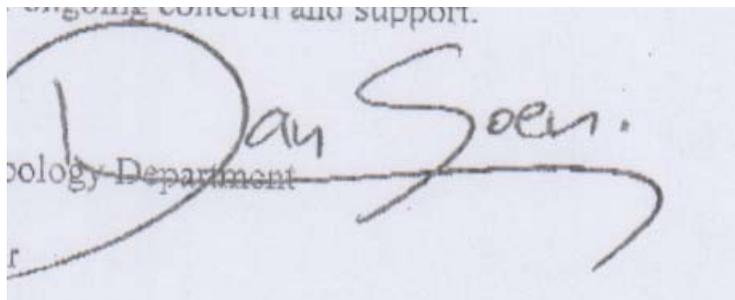
4. Faculty. On page 7, the committee notes that only 5 faculty are full-time employees of the AUC.

Since the committee's visit the faculty has grown. 7 faculty are full-time employees and an additional 2 are employed almost full time (75% position). The Department of Sociology and Anthropology permits several faculty to work in other departments, which allows the department to employ a greater number of instructors and enrich the areas of specialization in the department and broaden the faculty's areas of interests.

- We understand the comment concerning the need to increase the number of elective courses in anthropology. This will be done. In addition to a focus on anthropology of Israel, students will have the choice of courses on foreign cultures as well.
- 2. This is also the case for the committee's recommendations concerning students' command of English. As is well-known, this is a plague in all educational institutions in Israel. We will add English language items to the required reading lists of the courses. Nonetheless, the committee should take into account that students must use English in their work in seminars. Each student must submit two seminar papers!
- 5. The committee recommended that there was no point in opening a master's program at present, primarily because (page 7) the AUC is located in central Israel, at a short distance from other universities. Opening a graduate program at Ariel might cause a shift of students from these institutions to Ariel without guaranteeing a higher academic standard. Basically, the committee's recommendation is based on the assumption that the demand for a master's degree is limited and Ariel would place other institutions at risk by opening a graduate program.

Initially, the AUC plans to open 2 graduate programs: (a) organizational sociology, and (b) public opinion polls and surveys. The first program exists in all five universities (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, Beer Sheva, and Bar Ilan), under various titles, and the demand for such programs exceeds the supply. At Ariel, 29 students completed their undergraduate program with high achievements. This year, the number of students in the program is 145. Department also receive inquiries regarding graduate studies from graduates of other institutions. Therefore it seems to us that with the proper preparations and in the proper format, it is possible to open a graduate program at the AUC without causing any damage to the veteran institutions that offer a similar program. The second graduate program exists only at Haifa University and Jerusalem (under different titles). It seems to us that this program at the AUC will not damage the existing offering. Obviously, as it prepares for these graduate programs, the department will hire additional senior faculty.

We thank you for your ongoing concern and support.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Soen." The signature is written over a faint, rectangular stamp that contains the text "Sociology Department". Above the signature, the words "ongoing concern and support." are partially visible. The background is a light-colored, slightly textured paper.

Prof. Dan Soen

Sociology and Anthropology Department

Ariel University Center