



כו' כסלו תשע"ג
10 דצמבר 2012

לכבוד
גבי יעל אלבוחר
מרכזת הוועדה
המועצה להשכלה גבוהה

הנדון: דו"ח הוועדה להערכת איכות תכנית הלימודים בסוציולוגיה ואנתרופולוגיה

We would like to thank the Committee for the Evaluation of Sociology and Anthropology Study Programs for their thorough and comprehensive evaluation, recommendations and suggestions.

We would like to address the committee members' evaluations.

The decreasing enrollment to the department presumably leads to the negative ramifications that were raised in the evaluation:

1. The senior staff cannot devote all of their time to the department.
2. There is no recruitment of staff, especially in the anthropology areas.
3. The department offers relatively few courses, including those in anthropology, that focus on the Israeli society.

Regarding the level of teaching and the curriculum

It is worth noting that the curriculum for the double-track sociology and anthropology program was developed on the basis of extant programs in these disciplines at the Israeli universities. In a similar vein, we designed comparable syllabi in terms of the course requirements (including reading list, exams and other assignments). Furthermore, in order to maintain high academic standards, the department chair along with the teaching committee members inspect the courses' syllabi prior to each semester, especially making sure the reading list is updated and the course requirement are adequate. Finally, most of the faculty members' in the program have taught sociology or anthropology courses at various universities concurrently with lecturing at the Emek Yezreel College. As a result, they have no difficulty with maintaining comparable teaching level.

At least as far as sociology and anthropology are concerned, the main difference between teaching at the Emek Yezreel College and at the universities involves methods. We invest more in teaching, take a more personalized approach, and devote more attention to individual students (during lectures in class, office hours and teaching assistants' efforts) than is usually practiced at the universities.

In sum, we believe the sociology and anthropology double-track program at the Emek Yezreel College is capable of providing a comparably high level of teaching and curriculum to the one at the universities.

Regarding the Committee recommendations and suggestions

The department has taken several steps that have increased the enrollment to the department this year:

1. We are offering courses/ workshops that promote the students' specialization in three practical areas:
 - a. Human resource management and cross cultural management.
 - b. Management and development of social networks.
 - c. Research in the area of market surveys and in public opinion surveys.
2. We offer our students a fast track to the MA in Organizational Development and Consulting.
3. We established a practicum for third year students, providing them with experiential learning in real-life organizational contexts.

We agree with the committee that our department has to offer the courses in sociology and anthropology (especially at the introductory level courses) to the other departments in the college. We have already suggested that to the college president and the provost.

We are planning to implement the committee's suggestion: a) develop syllabi of statistics courses based on elite sociology and anthropology departments in other countries and improve the statistical knowledge among students ; b) applied research projects forums within two years in order to emphasize the practical orientation of the department. As stated in the evaluation, there is a heavy load of teaching on the full-time academic staff. Rather the faculty's commitment to research goes beyond the issue of promotion. Furthermore, the staff members also believe that conducting research is critical to quality, up-to-date teaching. Implementing suggestions such as reducing the teaching load and adding financial resources and research assistance can ease the pressure on the department members.

Regarding the Committee General Report (issues specific to the colleges)

1. We welcome the Committee's recommendation to MALAG to clarify the model of a "college" in Israel. When the colleges were first instituted, we were encouraged to develop our own identities, but now the colleges are expected to be similar to universities, at least in terms of what and how they teach, while at the same time to be "practical" in some sense. The Israeli colleges are unique and probably do not conform to a single American model (elite college, community college, or trade school). We suggest that the Israeli college model be defined broadly by the two following criteria: (1) excellent academic teaching institutions that enable relatively disadvantaged students to achieve parity with university graduates so as to enable them to enter into professions and graduate programs, (2) excellent research institutions with an emphasis, though not exclusively, on applied/action research. Furthermore, colleges may need some freedom to be creative and develop their own unique identities – along the lines of colleges in the United States.

2. The Committee voiced concern about the low failure rate in the colleges. It should be strongly pointed out that this low failure rate reflects success rather than a weakness or problem. The colleges were created in order to reduce social and economic inequalities by serving disadvantaged students who are unlikely to be accepted in the university and they have demonstrated their ability to bring these students up to the highest levels. In comparison to the universities, the specific goal of the college is to enable students to succeed and most, if not all, of the colleges invest enormous energies to this end. A much better test of the quality of the colleges is how well its graduates perform in graduate programs. Despite initial reluctance on the part of the universities to even accept college graduates in their graduate programs, these students have proven, beyond any doubt, that they can compete and even excel relative to university graduates.
3. We strongly support the Committee's comment about the importance of core faculty. Ultimately the quality of an academic institution depends on the creation of strong departments based on full-time faculty who enjoy the conditions that enable them to devote time to both students and to research. We also support the Committee's recommendation to bring criteria for promotion and rewards into line with job responsibilities. We believe that these criteria should include **both**, teaching and research, as well as other criteria involving contributions to the institution and the community. As an academic college we believe that the quality of the lecturers and their teaching is dependent on their involvement in research and in international publications, similar to university's lecturers. We cannot separate the quality of academic teaching from the quality of the lecturer's research and publications (in order to be at the cutting edge of the knowledge), we need them both.

We wish to thank the committee members again for their very constructive and helpful report.



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