



November 20, 2013

FOREIGN LITERATURES AND LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT  
Response to MALAG Review Committee Report

**A. Responses to points raised in the body of the report**

**Re: Evaluation of Literature**

As the report stresses, there was a misunderstanding: the Review Committee was told that their mandate was to evaluate linguistics only, whereas we had been promised that the evaluation would cover the entire department, both the linguistics and literature programs. Given the considerable amount of work we invested in the process, we are greatly disappointed.

**Re: Marketing the Department to Foreign Students**

The Committee notes that as the only department in the university whose undergraduate program is taught in English, we ought to be far more accessible to overseas students. We heartily agree. The department has opened courses to the Year Abroad Program and we hope that this will also generate interest for later studies. But distinct from that, and even more importantly, we think there is great potential for attracting full-time international students into our regular BA degree program. The reorganization of the Office of International Academic Affairs is an opportunity for the university to begin more actively to market the departmental programs to international students. To achieve this goal we think it indispensable to allocate a half-position to an administrator whose exclusive responsibility would be to handle all issues concerning full-time international students. Currently many such issues are not followed up and consequently students fall between the cracks and are lost to the university.

**Re: Department Size**

The Committee recognizes that the minimum required number of faculty to properly cover both undergraduate and graduate program needs in linguistics is eight to nine permanent members. With our current seven teaching positions we are managing to cover all basic needs of the program, but this forces us to regularly make difficult choices as the Committee correctly pointed out.

**B. Responses to Specific Review Committee Recommendations**

**Re: Brain and Cognitive Sciences Department**

The study of linguistics is a foundational component of cognitive science, and thus we are eager to work with the newly formed Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, on both administrative and intellectual levels, to insure that their needs in linguistics are met. We have had some success in working with the directors by participating in the initial call for applications and helping evaluate

candidates. Although communication and cooperation have not been as complete as we had hoped, we fully agree that collaboration is vital. We are committed to aiding in the development of a program that should be of benefit to both departments and the university. In the interest of collaboration we propose regular monthly meetings with representatives from both departments

### **Re: Phonology/Morphology & Psycholinguistics Positions**

The lack of qualified candidates for a position in phonology/morphology is a country- wide problem. We propose to address our own needs by expanding our search to include excellent candidates with either primary or secondary specialization in these areas. Our goal is to hire an outstanding faculty member with expertise to teach phonology/morphology at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In the intermediate term we fully support the recommendation that we need a psycholinguist.

### **Re: Immersion Course for Bedouin Students**

We wholeheartedly support the Committee's recommendation to provide a university-wide summer immersion course in English for our Bedouin students (and any other interested students).

### **Re: Writing Workshop**

We support the Committee's recommendation for a workshop suitably designed to meet the English writing needs of linguistics students. We are happy to report that our literature colleagues are also in favour of this initiative, and we will work together with them to investigate the possibilities.

### **Re: Recycling of Courses**

We are puzzled by this comment. We have a strict policy prohibiting exactly this kind of recycling, and our curriculum committee reviews course content to insure that this policy is in fact enforced, and will continue to do so.

### **Re: Diversification course offerings**

We are doing as much as we can to diversify our course offerings, given the size of the permanent teaching staff. We regularly seek out distinguished faculty who can offer mini courses on topics not normally covered by the permanent staff. The offering of a more varied course of study would be significantly improved by the hiring of additional permanent faculty members.

### **Re: Integration of Literature & Linguistics Courses**

Both the linguistics and literature faculty members are in support of such integration, and when the opportunity arises we do offer such courses. We will continue to work with our colleagues in literature to expand and enrich the offerings of integrated courses.

### **Re: Separation of Degrees**

We are happy to report that separation of degrees has already been completed.

### **Re: University Wide Pedagogy for TAs**

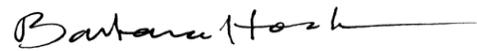
We strongly support the university-wide TA pedagogy workshop initiative and would be happy to provide input as to the specific needs of TAs for linguistics.

## **C. Acknowledgments**

The department wishes to thank the members of the Committee for all the work, thought, and care they

invested in the evaluation in our program, and for their insightful comments. We also wish to thank the Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Deputy Rector and the Deputy Rector's staff, for their assistance and support throughout the evaluation process.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Barbara Hochman in black ink.

Barbara Hochman  
Chair,  
Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics

Handwritten signature of David Newman in blue ink.

Professor David Newman  
Dean  
The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev