

December 2013

Ms. Yael Elbocher
Coordinator
Quality Assurance Committee Computer Science

Subject: Hadassah Academic College's Computer Science Curriculum

We hereby present our response to the comments made by the committee during its assessment of the quality of the Computer Science curricula at Hadassah Academic College.

2. Organizational Structure

(a) Number of Students in the Program

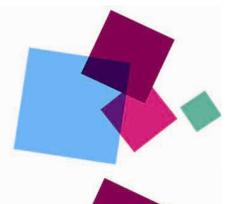
The department and Hadassah Academic College's administration engaged in a successful campaign to increase the number of students in the Computer Science department. More than fifty students have entered the program in the current academic year (2013/14), compared to about thirty last year. We will continue our campaign and hope and believe that this trend will persist in the future.

In addition, the faculty meets regularly with the administration and the marketing staff in order to maintain, and generate additional momentum. The marketing team is now completing the department's advertising campaign for the 2014/2015 academic year.

Further, Hadassah Academic College is offering a pre-academic program for ultra-Orthodox women at its Strauss Campus. This should increase even further the number of students enrolled at the school of Computer Science.

(b) Contacts with Alumni

Hadassah Academic College in general and the Department of Computer Science in particular have begun measures to establish ties with their alumni. This was intensified as a result of the recommendations made by the Computer Science Quality Assessment Committee following its visit. These measures have evolved into a diverse network of ties with alumni and will further be improved as part of the recent initiative of the College to create an Alumni Association. This has resulted in varying degrees of interaction with the alumni: Several graduates suggested different ideas of subjects from their own fields of work which they feel would be useful to include in student training (for example, use of open source code and contributions to the open source



repository). Others expressed a willingness to participate in meetings with students, give guest lectures, and even to propose new courses. Some alumni offered positions to students and new graduates.

Currently, nearly half the alumni maintain contacts with the department via LinkedIn, Facebook, or directly. The college itself is now completing the process of forming an alumni association. It is our intention to hold the school's first alumni convention this year.

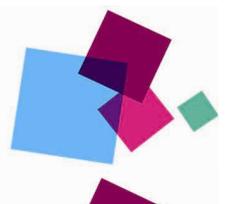
With the establishment of its Career Counseling Center, the college has recently begun to approach students prior to their graduation as well as fresh alumni to offer them support in finding jobs.

(c) Ties with Hi-Tech Industry

In light of the recommendations made by the Computer Science Quality Assessment Committee, the school is enhancing its ties with the hi-tech industry (especially with Intel, which previously also offered courses within the framework of the program). Faculty members are initiating, and will continue to promote, meetings with colleagues in the industrial sector to deepen the correlation between the curriculum and the requirements of the industry, particularly large hi-tech companies in Jerusalem, like Intel, Cisco, Mobileeye, and Ex Libris., which employ scores of alumni from our school

Since the committee's visit, the department has been making efforts to integrate a larger part of the students' final projects in various companies. The department has chosen mainly companies with which the college already has initial contacts and with which there are ongoing joint projects such as Intel, Cisco, Mobileeye, Ex Libris, and the Hadassah Medical Center at Ein Kerem and Mount Scopus. Efforts to intensify these activities will continue.

The college is currently engaged in a collaborative project with the Jerusalem Development Authority (JDA) to broaden the entire College's links to the Jerusalem industrial scene. The School of Computer Science is one of the chief candidates for this collaboration. The first working session with the JDA concerning cooperation with the industry took place recently. The objective is to interest the industry in our entrepreneurship projects and to set up centers of excellence for the industrial companies within the College, sponsored by the school. One example for this endeavor is the ongoing negotiations with Philips Medical Systems Technologies Ltd.



Within the framework of its attempts to encourage further connections and enhance the students' "corporate identity," the department will make efforts to invite alumni to address the students both as part of the specific courses in which they can impart their professional know-how as well as in general frameworks, where they will describe the development of their professional careers.

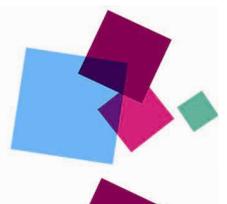
3. Vision and Goals

Based on remarks made by the committee during its visit, the department opened a Facebook page shortly thereafter (<https://www.facebook.com/cs.hadassah>); the page is popular among students and alumni alike, increases students' involvement and their sense of "corporate identity" and has boosted the "refer a friend" mode of attracting new students. Similarly, we also opened a You Tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/HadassahCS>). Finally, our web site was upgraded (<http://cs.hadassah.ac.il/>) and we now believe it presents a more positive and accurate image of the department. We are currently working on adding a Wikipedia entry about our department.

4. Curricula

As a result of the committee's recommendations, the department is more proactive in expanding its cooperation with other departments:

- Since the beginning of the current academic year, collaborative projects have launched with the Department of Politics and Communications involving the development of automated tools to make public information accessible and improve public services. At this stage, students from both departments, coached by NGOs promoting improved transportation services, are working on an application that will enable public-transportation users to issue alerts about problems in the system. The goal is to eventually expand this collaboration to other projects.
- The department is advancing scientific research collaboration with the Department of Optometry in image processing and computerized vision.
- The department is planning to collaborate with a group of lecturers and alumni from the Photographic Communications department. This collaboration will focus on digital tools to support visual anthropology in such a way that preserved heritage (which will include PowerPoint presentations, observation photographs, interviews and project results) will be available on the internet in a user-friendly way. We hope that this collaboration will eventually extend to other institutions working in these fields, e.g. the Israel Antiquities Authority,



the Bible Lands Museum, U. Nahon Museum of Italian Jewish Art and Holocaust Memorial.

The department will pursue collaborative projects with departments in other institutions of higher education in and outside of Jerusalem.

5. Human Resources / Professional Staff

With the signing of the collective employment agreement for college academic faculty about two years ago, far-reaching incentives to promote professional development of lecturers have been implemented. Today, the school actively encourages its faculty to participate in professional enrichment programs and provides comprehensive financing for this.

Similarly, as of the 2013/2014 academic year, lecturers engaged in research benefit from reduced teaching hours of up to one-third of their teaching position. Currently, two lecturers at the Department of Computer Science are benefiting from this program. As the process becomes established, more lecturers are expressing interest, and in time, more faculty members will likely join.

Several months ago, the college established a "Research and Development Authority" to promote research at the College. A lecturer who obtains funding from research grants for his/her project, will be entitled to a salary increase of up to 33% (above 100%), a measure approved by the Council for Higher Education.

6. Students

We are pleased that the quality of our curriculum and the efforts invested by our lecturers on behalf of their students are appreciated

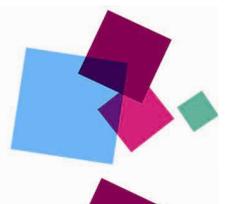
7. Teaching and Learning Outcomes

The department is forming a faculty committee which will verify that each course's exercises, projects and exams are created in a way that fairly and reliably assesses the learning outcome.

8. Research

We are pleased that our faculty members are doing their best to be involved in research activities within the college.

In addition, the department has joined the European Union's Tempus Program, of which Hadassah Academic College is the leading partner. We were recently informed that the project has been chosen for funding by the European Union (approximately €1



million). As part of the project, the Department of Computer Science will collaborate with additional departments in the College (the Department of Optometry, the Department of Photographic Communications, and the Department of Communication Disorders). Moreover, the program facilitates scientific collaboration with seven Israeli institutions and nine EU institutions. The objective of the current project is to develop programs for lifelong learning in applied sciences.

9. Infrastructure

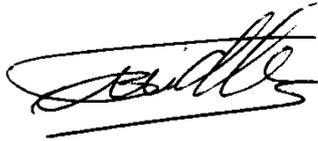
In conjunction with the Purchasing and IT Department, the department will appoint a committee to review the infrastructure required for implementation of the school's curricula.

Recently, the school's website has been completely upgraded to a more user friendly version and will impact the new marketing efforts.

10. Self-Assessment

We accept the committee's comments.

Respectfully,



Prof. Prof. Bertold Fridlender
President

