



**Committee for the Evaluation of Public Health and Health System  
Management**

**Bar Ilan University  
Public health and health system management  
Evaluation Report**

**September 2017**

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## Chapter 1: Background

Following the decision of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) to evaluate study programs in the field of Public Health and Health System Management. The Minister of Education, who serves ex officio as Chairperson of the CHE, appointed a Committee consisting of:

- [Prof. Gerald Kominski](#)- Professor of Health Policy and Management and Director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, UCLA, USA; Committee Chair.
- [Prof. Joan R. Bloom](#)- Professor of the Graduate Division, Program in Health Policy and Management, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, USA.
- [Prof. Joseph N.S. Eisenberg](#)- John G. Searle endowed Chair and Professor of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health, University of Michigan, USA.
- [Prof. Jack Zwanziger](#)- Professor of Health Policy and Administration, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA.
- [Prof. Joseph S. Pliskin](#)<sup>1</sup>- Professor Emeritus, Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, and Department of Health Systems Management, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

Ms. Daniella Sandler and Ms. Inbal Haskell-Gordon served as the Coordinators of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:<sup>2</sup>

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Public Health and Health Management, and to conduct on-site visits at those institutions.
2. Submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the evaluated academic units and study programs, including the Committee's findings and recommendations.
3. Submit to the CHE a general report regarding the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Pliskin did not take part in the evaluation, visit, discussion and writing of the BGU report due to Conflict of Interest.

<sup>2</sup> The Committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

The entire process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (of September 2015).

## **Chapter 2: Committee Procedures**

The Committee held its first meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as Electrical and Communication System Engineering Study programs in Israel.

In May 2017, the Committee held its visits of evaluation to seven institutions: Tel-Aviv University, Ariel University, Ben-Gurion University, University of Haifa, Academic College of Emek Yizreel, Bar-Ilan University and Hebrew University. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

This report deals with the The Public health and health system management at Bar - Ilan University. The Committee's visit to the University took place on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The schedule of the visit is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The Committee thanks the management of Bar Ilan University, the Department of Management and the Public health and health system management program for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

## **Chapter 3: Evaluation of the Public health and health system management program Bar Ilan University**

*This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the visit to the institution, and does not take account of any subsequent changes. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Evaluation Committee based on the documentation provided by the institution, information gained through interviews, discussion and observation as well as other information available to the Committee.*

### **1. Executive Summary**

Bar Ilan University (BIU), established in 1955 and recognized by CHE in 1969, strives to combine cutting edge research with the finest standards of academic teaching. It also aims to promote Jewish Studies and research in this area, requiring students to enroll in courses centering on basic concepts in Judaism. BIU contributes to society through community involvement projects, involving both faculty and students, to strengthen bonds between itself and the community, while aspiring to narrow social disparities and to create a stronger and healthier Israeli society.

The Department of Management was established in 2010 to consolidate the programs of study in the areas of logistics management, industrial management, and management of health and public health systems. The Department offers the Masters of Health Administration (MHA) degree. Because students in this program are required to have at least two years' work experience and they are already health professionals, they are not required to have a field placement. The placement of the program in Health Systems Management and Public Health within the Department of Management seems less than ideal from the Committee's perspective, and we recommend that the University explore alternatives for the program to have a more appropriate organizational "home," perhaps as its own Department.

The Committee found the program at BIU to have a strong students and alumni. Faculty resources are not adequate for the number of students and high quality health professionals attending the program; there is too great a reliance on adjuncts, and thus, a need for more full-time and part-time faculty. Of greatest

concern, according to the current students and alumni that we interviewed, the program is a “one woman-show” run by Dr. Magnezi. The compliments bestowed upon her were unanimous about her dedication, accessibility, and devotion. Nevertheless, no program can survive and prosper without a broader institutional commitment of resources.

The Committee identified several recommendations to strengthen a program that is functioning well despite being under-resourced. We were impressed by the quality and loyalty of current students and alumni, and believe this program plays an important function in providing a second degree to health professionals. Our recommendations are discussed further below.

## **2. Mission and Goals**

### **Observations and findings**

The MHA program in Health Systems Management and Public Health does not have a fully developed Mission Statement with Goals and Objectives. The information provided in Chapter 1, Section B of the self-evaluation report should be organized into a more succinct Mission Statement with goals and objectives that clearly follow from the program’s mission.

### **Recommendations**

**Essential:** Develop a clearer Mission Statement for the MHA program with goals and objectives that follow logically from the program’s mission.

## **3. Organizational Structure**

### **Observations and findings**

The Health Systems Management and Public Health MHA and PhD degree programs are housed in the Department of Management. The Committee found the Department to be an unusual “home” for the program because of the Department’s focus on logistical and IT management. Furthermore, during our site visit, we did not have the impression that faculty and students benefitted from being part of the

Department in terms of either teaching synergy between programs within the Department or students learning from each other across programs. We do not see any obvious alternative “home” for the program, however.

The Head of program indicated to us she would like to change the name of the program to Health Policy and Management, and we agree that this would be a more appropriate name, particularly because there is minimal public health content in the existing MHA curriculum.

### Recommendations

**Essential:** Change the name of the program to Health Policy and Management.

**Desirable:** Current student enrollment levels suggest that the program is large enough to be designated as a new, separate Department of Health Policy and Management.

## **4. Study Program and Teaching and Learning Outcomes**

### Observations and findings

#### **a. Study Program**

The Department of Management resides within the Faculty of Social Sciences. Public health and health system management is a relatively new program. Graduates of the program receive a certificate of MHA (Master in Health Administration) and/or a PhD. Since the program’s inception, the number of students has increased with an increasing number of MDs entering the program. Thus, the number of students was 125 with 3 MDs in 2014; in 2015, 87 students were in the first year of the program with 18 of them being MDs; in the current academic year 75 students were admitted to the program which included 30 MDs. Approximately, 10% of students are Arabs. Most do not opt to do a thesis although this may be changing.

The objective of the program is to “enrich the theoretical, academic, and practical knowledge in the field of public health and health system management, to provide those involved in the health professions with the ability to implement new and advanced approaches to the management of healthcare organizations, and to deal with health policy issues. While the program is well accepted by the students, most are working and opt for the “without” thesis option. Those that do opt out of the thesis option, including PhD students, receive mentoring primarily from one faculty

member who is also the Head of the Program.

The strengths of the program include its focus on managers in the healthcare system; a combination of researchers, academics, and lecturers active in the health system; and a program tailored to healthcare system employees (being offered in the afternoon).

The weaknesses of this program have to do with the fact that there are fiscal incentives for more research to be conducted by the program's students; there is a lack of joint research initiatives, probably due to limited faculty availability.

### **b. Teaching and Learning Outcomes**

While reference is made to the Bologna criteria of program outcomes (competencies), neither course nor program outcomes are specified a priori. Instead, the focus is on responses to the questions asked under the evaluation of teaching. That is, the main focus is on student's evaluation of the quality of teaching which is done through a feedback survey where students evaluate each course and the lectures within the courses. While this is valuable for faculty, it is not systematic. Nor does it assess the validity of course content Vis a Vis outcome objectives.

One of the most popular and well-taught courses on Advanced Management was "online" except for three sessions. The students indicated that they would prefer that the course be taught in-person for more sessions given the importance of the topic.

#### **Recommendations:**

**Essential:** Program outcomes should be specified for each course. Courses should also be evaluated periodically; course syllabi should be assessed by a curriculum committee to determine whether the course competencies have been met. The model for doing this is provided by BGU Dept. of Health Systems Management development of the learning outcomes established by the Bologna working group on qualifications.

**Advisable:** We recommend that the popular online course become a residential course.

## **5. Human Resources / Faculty**

### **Observations and findings**

The program of Public Health and Health Systems Management is one of four programs in the Department of Management, which is one of 12 departments and schools within the Faculty of Social Sciences. The Department of Management has

about 20 FTEs for senior faculty members.

Table 5 in the Self-Assessment Report lists three senior faculty members for the program: Dr. Magnezi, Prof. Rosenbloom and Prof. Schnaiderman. However, during the visit we found out that the latter two are full-time members of the department but not of the program. There are only two full time faculty members in the program: Prof. Racheli Magnezi who heads the program and the newly recruited Dr. Tzipi Hornik-Lurie. We met with three additional faculty and staff members: Prof. Yona Amitai who founded the program and is now retired, Dr. Orna Tal who has a visiting appointment (She is Deputy Director of Assaf Harofe Medical Center) and Dr. Galit Cohen Butbut who provides statistical services for the department.

Table 6 provides a list of six people that are classified as instructor or teaching fellow. One of them is the newly recruited full time faculty. Five of the six have a Doctoral degree.

Only Dr. Magezi can supervise doctoral students. She has several co-supervisors, which help relieve the burden in her. According to the current students and alumni that we interviewed, the program is a “one woman-show” run by Dr. Magnezi. The compliments bestowed upon her were unanimous about her dedication, accessibility, and devotion.

The current student to faculty ratio is currently about 80 to 1. Hiring two additional faculty members will reduce it to 40 to 1.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential:**

Hire immediately at least two full time faculty members.

## **6. Students**

### Observations and findings

Applications to the program have been relatively stable. Admission to the program appears to be consistent with the stated criteria. The number accepted has fallen to the range of 110 and the number enrolled has dropped to a stable range of approximately 75 per year. The total number of students in the MHA program is approximately 150 of whom 75% are female, 10% Arab; essentially all are working

in the healthcare system, 30 were physicians in the current year. Each year about 10% of those who enrolled proceed into the research program (with a thesis) who can last up to 5 years.

The dropout rate has been very low (6%) and marginal. Reasons for leaving are usually related to family issues (such as birth, death of a family member, etc.) or medical condition.

Essentially all graduates continue working in the healthcare system, approximately 3-4 go on to a PhD in total.

### Recommendations

**Advisable:** Highly qualified applicants may currently be rejected due to resource limitations. Given the value the students and alumni see in the program, this limitation is undesirable. With more faculty, the program could admit more qualified applicants.

## **7. Research**

### Observations and findings

Within the program, five faculty are listed as having research grants totaling around \$550K over 3 years. Although the research productivity of the program overall is modest, the five faculty that have brought in funds to the University are doing a good job and have been publishing. Six faculty have published 61 papers in the past years resulting in 3.4 publications per faculty per year (one faculty member published four articles over 3 years although they did not bring in any research funds).

The university provides modest funds for doctoral students (\$278 per student per year), which was deemed inadequate by the students. We were impressed that the students are successful in publishing papers. We found that this was mostly due to the support of a few key faculty members. These faculty members have been doing incredible work; however, student productivity cannot be sustained without additional faculty in the program.

## Recommendations

### **Essential:**

1. Student research funds should be increased to support conference travel for those that are presenting their work. Students need to be able to travel to conferences to present their research. This type of exposure is crucial for career enhancement.
2. Additional faculty are required to increase the research productivity of both the faculty as well as the students.

## **8. Infrastructure**

### Observations and findings

The self-evaluation report identified no infrastructure needs for the program, but our site visit revealed some very significant needs. The Head of Program has a poor quality office not really fitting for someone heading a program with so many students, many of whom are MDs working in major hospitals and HMOs. We were shown a small space that is being requested for the program, but did not have access. For the outside, that space appeared to require significant renovation to meet the standards of a program serving so many health professionals.

### Recommendations

**Essential:** Provide the Head of the Program adequate office space of sufficiently high quality in keeping with the status of the program and the professional standards of health professionals who are students in the program.

## **9. Self-Evaluation Process and implementation of previous recommendations**

### **Observations and findings**

The Committee found the self-evaluation report to be very incomplete and lacking in many sections, and incomplete in providing information about the MHA and PhD program in Health Systems Management and Public Health. Too many of the tables and the text responses focused on the University or the Department of Management, when our task was to evaluate all the programs. As a result, our task, which was to evaluate the program, was more difficult because the self-evaluation didn't provide all the information we needed about the program. For the next Quality Assurance self-evaluation, the University must be certain to provide information specific to the program being evaluated.

### **Recommendations**

**Essential:** In future self-evaluation reports, focus on providing information about the degree programs being evaluated, rather than more general information about the University or the unit in which the program is located.

## **Chapter 4: Summary of Recommendations**

### **Essential Recommendations:**

- Develop a clearer Mission Statement for the MHA program with goals and objectives that follow logically from the program's mission.
- Change the name of the program to Health Policy and Management.
- Program outcomes should be specified for each course. Courses should also be evaluated periodically; course syllabi should be assessed by a curriculum committee to determine whether the course competencies have been met. The model for doing this is provided by BGU Dept. of Health Systems Management development of the learning outcomes established by the Bologna working group on qualifications.
- Hire immediately at least two full time faculty members.
- Student research funds should be increased to support conference travel for those that are presenting their work. Students need to be able to travel to conferences to present their research. This type of exposure is crucial for career enhancement.
- Additional faculty are required to increase the research productivity of both the faculty as well as the students.
- Provide the Head of the Program adequate office space of sufficiently high quality in keeping with the status of the program and the professional standards of health professionals who are students in the program.
- In future self-evaluation reports focus on providing information about the degree programs being evaluated, rather than more general information about the University or the unit in which the program is located.

### **Advisable Recommendations:**

- We recommend that the popular online course become a residential course.
- Highly qualified applicants may currently be rejected due to resource limitations. Given the value the students and alumni see in the program, this limitation is undesirable. With more faculty, the program could admit more

qualified applicants.

**Desirable Recommendations:**

- Current student enrollment levels suggest that the program is large enough to be designated as a new, separate Department of Health Policy and Management.

**Signed by:**



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Prof. Gerald Kominski- CHAIR



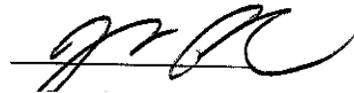
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Prof. Joan R. Bloom



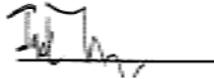
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Prof. Joseph N.S Eisenberg



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Prof. Joseph S. Pliskin



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Prof. Jack Zwanziger

**Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment**

**Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment**

May 2017

Prof. Gerald F. Kominski, Ph.D  
Department of Health Policy and Management  
UCLA Fielding School of Public Health  
USA

Dear Professor,

The Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) strives to ensure the continuing excellence and quality of Israeli higher education through a systematic evaluation process. By engaging upon this mission, the CHE seeks: to enhance and ensure the quality of academic studies, to provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel, and to ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

As part of this important endeavor we reach out to world renowned academicians to help us meet the challenges that confront the Israeli higher education by accepting our invitation to participate in our international evaluation committees. This process establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial enterprise.

It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **Public Health and Health System Management**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Joan Bloom, Prof. Joseph N.S. Eisenberg, Prof. Jack Zwanziger, and Prof. Joseph Pliskin.

Ms. Daniella Sandler will be the coordinator of the Committee.

Details regarding the operation of the committee and its mandate are provided in the enclosed appendix.

I wish you much success in your role as a Chair of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Prof. Ido Perlman  
Vice Chair,  
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

*Enclosures:* Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

cc: Dr. Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for QA, CHE  
Ms. Daniella Sandler, Committee Coordinator

**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>
10:00-10:30	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Prof. Miriam Faust , Rector Prof. Amnon Albeck, Vice Rector
10:30-11:00	Meeting with the Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences	Prof. Joseph Deutsch, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
11:00-11:25	Meeting with the Chair of the Department of Management	Prof. Sara Westrich, Chair, Department of Management
11:25-11:50	Meeting with the Head of the Public Health and Health Systems Management Program	Dr. Racheli Magnezi, Head, Public Health and Health Systems Management Program
<b>11:50-12:00</b>	<b>Break</b>	
12:00-13:00	Meeting with academic staff *	Prof. Tova Rosenbloom Prof. Yona Amitai Prof. Haim Shnaiderman Dr. Tzipi Hornik-Lurie Dr. Orna Tal Dr. Galit Cohen Butbul
13:00-13:45	Lunch (in the same room)	<b>Closed-door meeting of the committee</b>
13:45-14:35	Meeting with M.A. and Ph.D. students**	
14:35-15:20	Meeting with Alumni	
15:20-15:40	Short tour of the facilities	
15:40 -16:00	<b>Closed-door meeting of the committee</b>	
16:00 -16:20	Summation meeting with heads of institution, Dean and Chair of the Department	Prof. Miriam Faust , Rector Prof. Amnon Albeck, Vice Rector Prof. Joseph Deutsch, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences Prof. Sara Westrich, Chair, Department of Management Dr. Racheli Magnezi, Head, Public Health and Health Systems Management Program

**Location:** Building no. 605, Room no. 307