



Committee for the Evaluation of English Teacher Education Study Programs

David Yellin Academic College of Education

Department of English

Evaluation Report

November 2017

Contents

Chapter 1:	Background.....	3
Chapter 2:	Committee Procedures.....	4
Chapter 3:	Evaluation of English Teacher Education Study Program at David Yellin Academic College of Education.....	5
Chapter 4:	Summary of Recommendations	10

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Letter of Appointment

Appendix 2 – Schedule of the visit

Chapter 1: Background

The Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of English Teacher Education during the academic year of 2016-2017.

Following the decision of the CHE, the Vice Chair of the CHE appointed a Committee consisting of:

- **Prof. Claude Goldenberg**, Stanford University, USA - committee chair
- **Prof. Charlene Rivera**, The George Washington University, Washington DC, USA.
- **Prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall**, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA.
- **Prof. Malatesha Joshi**, Texas A&M, USA.
- **Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler**, The State University of New York at Buffalo, USA.
- **Prof. Penny Ur**, Oranim Academic College, Israel.
- **Prof. Bernard Spolsky** (Emeritus), Bar-Ilan University, Israel.
- **Prof. Hana Wirth-Nesher**, Tel-Aviv University, Israel.

Ms. Maria Levinson-Or served as the Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:¹

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in English Teacher Education, 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.

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

¹ The Committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Chapter 2: Committee Procedures

The Committee held its first meetings on 21.05.2017, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as English Teacher Education Study programs in Israel.

In May 2017, the Committee held its first visit of evaluation, and visited the David Yellin Academic College of Education, Talpiot College of Education, Jerusalem College, Orot Israel Academic College of Education, Kaye Academic College of Education, and Herzog College. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

This report deals with the Department of English Teacher Education at the David Yellin Academic College of Education. The Committee's visit to the David Yellin Academic College took place on May 22, 2017.

Due to scheduling considerations, the committee split into two groups and held simultaneous visits in the institutions. The group that visited David Yellin was chaired by Professor Goldenberg and included Professor Crandall, and Professor Ur.

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

The Committee thanks the management of the David Yellin Academic College of Education and the Department of English Teacher Education for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

Chapter 3: Evaluation of English Teacher Education Study Program at David Yellin Academic College of Education

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

The David Yellin Academic College of Education has an excellent reputation, reflecting more than 100 years of service to Israeli education. College administrators and faculty recognize the social needs for English and the needs of different groups within Israel. The college views its population as 'a microcosm of Israeli society' with representation of all sectors. There is a sense of enthusiasm among both faculty and students. Faculty are warm and supportive, attentive to the needs of individual students, and willing to be flexible where needed.

Many of the faculty in the English department have extensive experience in public school teaching, and their real-world expertise is expressed in the content of their courses. It is particularly noteworthy that the head of the English department is an experienced classroom teacher. At the same time, most faculty either have a Ph.D. or are in doctoral programs. All English department courses are taught through English, as are five of the education courses.

Overall, we conclude that, with a few exceptions, the program provides adequate preparation for successful beginning teaching. We recommend a number of changes falling into three categories: Study Programs, Human Resources/Faculty, and Infrastructure.

2. Study Programs

Observations and findings

Overall program organization

Students are required to choose between elementary and secondary tracks. In the elementary school, they have to choose two subject specializations, leaving less time available for studies of English pedagogy and proficiency. Providing an option for a single major would enable students to focus more on English proficiency and pedagogy in both elementary and secondary schools, while provision for a parallel double major program would allow those who so desire to study, for example, elementary school with special education or to study another subject, such as special education, together with English.

There is no reason why a single-major program should not prepare for both elementary and secondary schools, as is the case in most other colleges.

Admission

Students are admitted to age/school tracks but might not be admitted to the English program. This might be problematic and unfair to students who register to attend the college in the hopes of becoming English teachers but do not necessarily realize that admission to the English preparation program is a 2-step admissions process.

The practicum

There are some problems of coordination in the practicum for secondary school, as well as difficulty in finding good host teachers for English placements at secondary.

The curriculum

Coverage of key topics in the curriculum is unbalanced. For example, there is an emphasis on teaching reading at the expense of writing and oral language. There are occasional redundancies (topics treated twice, in different syllabi) and a preponderance of isolated single-semester courses (one credit), which could possibly lead to a fragmented overall program. Some essential content is not taught in depth. The literature courses are viewed by some as boring or irrelevant.

Proficiency

In principle, all students are obliged to take all the proficiency courses. The classes are therefore rather large and heterogeneous, and the content may not be appropriate for some students.

Syllabi

The layout and organization of the syllabi is inconsistent; the content of some of them is superficial. The readings and other resources, as well as the bibliographies, often appears to be out of date. Sometimes the title of the course does not seem to correspond clearly with its content; for example, Introduction to Language Awareness is actually Introduction to Linguistics; Classroom Language –Theory and Practice is actually a more advanced course in writing.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
Overall program organization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be given the option for a single major (subject specialization). 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should also have the option to qualify to teach English in both elementary and secondary schools. 	Important
Admissions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be better coordination between age/track admission and English major admission. At a minimum, the procedures should be made transparent to applicants. 	Important
The practicum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be better coordination of placement and supervision between the secondary track head and English department pedagogical advisor. 	Important
The curriculum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogy courses should ensure clear, comprehensive, and balanced coverage of teaching the four skills and grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (as well as other topics). 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study program should be organized with clear delineation of pedagogical, literature, linguistics, and proficiency courses. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancies and overlaps across courses should be identified and eliminated in order to make space for material that needs attention. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A course should be added within linguistics on language acquisition (both first and second languages). 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A course should be added within linguistics on multilingualism and multiculturalism. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of single-semester (one-credit) courses relative to yearly ones could be reduced; some pairs of single-semester courses could be combined into yearly courses. 	Desirable
Literature	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory literature courses should address issues of different approaches to interpretation of literary texts, genre, cultural and historical context, and the multicultural dimension of Anglophone literatures (including majority and minority perspectives expressed in literary texts and methods of analysis). 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature classes should be designed to pay more attention to teaching in order to provide a model for school teaching of literature; teachers should employ 	Important

teaching methods to make literature classes more attractive and engaging to students.	
Proficiency classes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficiency classes that deal separately with oral and written skills should be added to the curriculum. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficiency classes should be more homogeneous and smaller (<20), especially for the lower levels. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A systematic way to assess and exempt students with sufficiently high proficiency levels in specific skills from further classes in these skills should be developed; this will require more frequent proficiency assessment. 	Important
Syllabi	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabi should have a uniform format, including at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title ○ Year offered ○ One- or two-semester ○ Year of program, if relevant ○ How often given, if relevant ○ Number of hours/credits ○ Prerequisites ○ Mandatory or elective ○ Goals/Learning outcomes (as defined in the self-evaluation guidelines) ○ Course description/summary ○ Week-by-week content, assignments, and readings ○ Assessment ○ Bibliography 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course titles of syllabi documents should correspond clearly with the course content. 	<i>Essential</i>

3. Human Resources / Faculty

Observations and findings

There does not seem to be any systematic method of support or provision of mentoring for incoming faculty. There is also a lack of ongoing teacher development processes for the teaching staff as a whole.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department should provide opportunities for structured student feedback for all department courses and ensure that feedback is reviewed by the program head and discussed with instructors as needed in order to improve courses. 	<i>Essential</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more systematic faculty induction process should be set up, including appointment of a mentor for faculty who are new to the institution. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time should be set aside, perhaps two meetings every semester, for faculty development, including, for example, sharing of recommended professional readings or innovative or successful teaching strategies. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty should be encouraged to attend and present at professional conferences and publish professional or academic articles, including research. 	Important

4. Infrastructure

Observations and findings

Most of the essential journals are available in the library. However, many books are only available in out-of-date editions and some are not available at all.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential books listed in course bibliographies should be identified and acquired, including the latest editions of standard works; the important journals should be available online; and incentives and opportunities should be provided for students to use them. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journals that are necessary for the different areas (methodology, literature, linguistics) should be identified and made available to students through online subscriptions. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be permanent online subscriptions to the major English-teaching journals including <i>ELT Journal</i>, <i>English Teaching Professional</i>, <i>Language Teaching</i>, <i>TESOL Quarterly</i>, and <i>English Teaching Forum</i>. 	Important

Chapter 4: Summary of Recommendations

Essential:

- Pedagogy courses should ensure clear, comprehensive, and balanced coverage of teaching the four skills and grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (as well as other topics).
- Mandatory literature courses should address issues of different approaches to interpretation of literary texts, genre, cultural and historical context, and the multicultural dimension of Anglophone literatures (including majority and minority perspectives expressed in literary texts and methods of analysis).
- Proficiency classes that deal separately with oral and written skills should be added to the curriculum.
- Syllabi should have a uniform format, including at least:
 - Title
 - Year offered
 - One- or two-semester
 - Year of program, if relevant
 - How often given, if relevant
 - Number of hours/credits
 - Prerequisites
 - Mandatory or elective
 - Goals/Learning outcomes (as defined in the self-evaluation guidelines)
 - Course description/summary
 - Week-by-week content, assignments, and readings
 - Assessment
 - Bibliography
- Course titles of syllabi documents should correspond clearly with the course content.
- The department should provide opportunities for structured student feedback for all department courses and ensure that feedback is reviewed by the program head and discussed with instructors as needed in order to improve courses.
- Essential books listed in course bibliographies should be identified and acquired, including the latest editions of standard works; the important journals should be available online; and incentives and opportunities should be provided for students to use them.

Important:

- Students should be given the option for a single major (subject specialization).

- Students should also have the option to qualify to teach English in both elementary and secondary schools.
- There should be better coordination between age/track admission and English major admission. At a minimum, the procedures should be made transparent to applicants.
- There should be better coordination of placement and supervision between the secondary track head and English department pedagogical advisor.
- The study program should be organized with clear delineation of pedagogical, literature, linguistics, and proficiency courses.
- Redundancies and overlaps across courses should be identified and eliminated in order to make space for material that needs attention.
- A course should be added within linguistics on language acquisition (both first and second languages).
- A course should be added within linguistics on multilingualism and multiculturalism.
- Literature classes should be designed to pay more attention to teaching in order to provide a model for school teaching of literature; teachers should employ teaching methods to make literature classes more attractive and engaging to students.
- Proficiency classes should be more homogeneous and smaller (<20), especially for the lower levels.
- A systematic way to assess and exempt students with sufficiently high proficiency levels in specific skills from further classes in these skills should be developed; this will require more frequent proficiency assessment.
- A more systematic faculty induction process should be set up, including appointment of a mentor for faculty who are new to the institution.
- Time should be set aside, perhaps two meetings every semester, for faculty development, including, for example, sharing of recommended professional readings or innovative or successful teaching strategies.
- Faculty should be encouraged to attend and present at professional conferences and publish professional or academic articles, including research.
- Journals that are necessary for the different areas (methodology, literature, linguistics) should be identified and made available to students through online subscriptions.
- There should be permanent online subscriptions to the major English-teaching journals including *ELT Journal*, *English Teaching Professional*, *Language Teaching*, *TESOL Quarterly*, and *English Teaching Forum*.

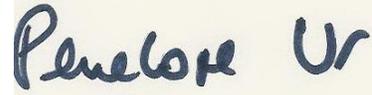
Desirable:

- The number of single-semester (one-credit) courses relative to yearly ones could be reduced; some pairs of single-semester courses could be combined into yearly courses.

Signed by:



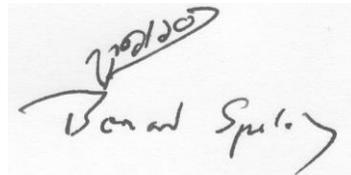
Prof. Claude Goldenberg - Chair



Prof. Penny Ur



Prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall



Prof. Bernard Spolsky

Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment



January 2017

Prof. Claude Goldenberg
Graduate School of Education
Stanford University
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 **English Teacher Education**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler, prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall, prof. Malatesha Joshi, prof. Charlene Rivera, prof. Bernard Spolsky, Penny Ur and prof. Hana Wirth-Nesher.

Ms. Maria Levinson-Or 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 member of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rivka Wadmany
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. Maria Levinson-Or, Committee Coordinator

Appendix 2: Schedule of the Visit

<u>English Teacher Education - Schedule of site visit</u> <u>David Yellin Academic College of Education</u>		
22.05.17, 'Shachar' Room, Building Alef		
09:00-	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Professor Zemira Mevarech - College President Professor Hava Guy – Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Revital Heimann - Head of Research Authority
09:30-	Meeting with the (relevant) Heads of the Age/School Tracks	Dr. Smadar Galili (Elementary Track) Dr. Yossi Gudovitch (Secondary Track) Dr. Aviva Bar Nir (Special Education Track) Dr. Yasser Sanduka (Special Ed in the Arab Society Track)
10:30-	Meeting with the Head of the Study program	Dr. Elizabeth Karvonen
11:15-	break	
11:30-	Meeting with senior academic staff *	Dr. Aliza Yahav, Dr. Jen Sundick, Dr. Erin Henriksen-Iosbashvili, Ms. Hanne Solomon, Mr. Leo Selivan, Dr. Julia Adler, Dr. (Assistant Professor) Rick Curwin, Dr. Michelle Waxman
	Meeting with pedagogical instructors*	Ms. Nicole Broder, Dr. Julia Schlam-Salman, Dr. Tamar Meirovitz
13:00-	Lunch (in the same room)	Closed-door meeting of the committee
13:45-	Open slot	
14:30-	Meeting with B.Ed. students**	
15:15-	Meeting with Alumni**	
16:00-	Closed-door meeting of committee	
16:20-	Closing meeting with the heads of institutions and the head of the study program	Professor Zemira Mevarech - College President Professor Hava Guy – Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Elizabeth Karvonen - Head of the English Department