

לשכת סגן הרקטור
Office of the Vice Rector

בס"ד, כ"ה בכסלו התשע"א
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לכבוד
גב' מריסה גרוס
מרכזת הוועדה להערכת איכות – מתמטיקה
היחידה להערכת איכות והבטחתה
המועצה להשכלה גבוהה
ירושלים

שלום רב,

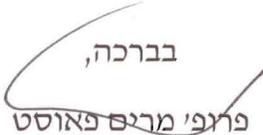
הנדון: הוועדה להערכת איכות - מתמטיקה

אני מתכבדת להעביר אליכם בזאת את תגובת אוניברסיטת בר-אילן לדו"ח הפרטני של הוועדה להערכת איכות לימודי המתמטיקה בבר-אילן.

התגובה נכתבה ע"י פרופ' רון עדין, ראש המחלקה, על דעת הדיקן ועל דעתי.

ברצוני להודות לוועדה על עבודתה המקצועית והיסודית ועל מסקנותיה החשובות.

חנוכה שמח!


בברכה,
פרופ' מריסה גרוס
סגנית הרקטור
והממונה על הערכת איכות

העתק: פרופ' חיים טייטלבוים, רקטור
פרופ' בנימין ארנברג, דקן הפקולטה למדעים מדוייקים
פרופ' רון עדין, ראש המחלקה למתמטיקה
גב' מיכל נוימן, ממונה תחום הערכת איכות והבטחתה, מלי"ג

Comments on the Report on Mathematics

Enclosed below are our comments on the recent report and recommendations of the Committee for the Evaluation of Mathematics Study-Programs. Also included is some information about relevant events that took place after the committee's visit.

We thank the committee for its very positive and encouraging remarks.

We intend to follow the advice in Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 2 addresses one of the most pressing needs of the department: the severe shortage in office space. Since the visit of the committee we have received from the university, as a by-product of a complicated exchange transaction, one more room. We decided to use it to double the number of rooms available to our postdoctoral fellows (nearly 10 postdocs this year, now in 2 rooms). We also exchanged rooms with the Department of Computer Science, resulting in a more conveniently located office for some of our faculty. Needless to say, the department's overall room shortage (with Associate Professors sharing a room, etc.) is still very critical.

Recommendation 3: We have taken several steps to widen the circle of people involved in the process of new hiring. In this year's process we have involved all our senior faculty members, from the degree of Lecturer and up, in the initial discussions and voting on tenure track candidates. Special emphasis was put on hearing our younger colleagues. Further discussions will still be held within our Appointments Committee, but two new members, who are not Full Professors, have been added to its ranks. The issue of planning appointments several years ahead, either per area or per person, is a delicate one and needs further deliberation.

Recommendation 4: We plan a second students-alumni meeting in the spring, where alumni working in various jobs (industry, teaching, academia) will share their experience and hindsight with current students. A first such meeting was held last year.

Recommendation 5: The drop-out rate and the level of preparation of the entering class in Mathematics is now a nation-wide problem. On the local scale - we have introduced a summer preparatory course, mandatory for students with relatively low matriculation grades and recommended for all students. On the national scale - we have asked the incoming administration of the Israel Mathematical Union, shifting (by rotation) to Bar-Ilan University this coming January, to initiate a review of first year curricula in all Israeli universities. There is vigorous current activity on such issues in the Israeli math community.

Recommendation 6: We are doing our best to maintain and expand the program in Financial Mathematics, with its steadily increasing enrollment figures. The search for a suitable leader in the field is not an easy one, though.

Recommendation 7: Indeed, the insufficient number of faculty members is one of our most pressing needs. The department's current teaching commitments add up to about 10 positions beyond the actual number of faculty members. Ideally, these positions

should be held by genuine researchers, faculty members, rather than external teachers. The current situation, with increased teaching load on existing faculty, adversely affects research productivity, availability of faculty to students and the number of students who continue to graduate studies. We have been informed about plans of the University administration for some sort of hiring reform, and we are looking forward to its positive implementation. We have also prepared a plan for streamlining hiring versus retirement in the forthcoming decade.

Recommendation 8: Our library committee works closely with the newly-appointed library manager, not only on the (essentially nonexistent) budget for books but also on journal subscriptions and the library's electronic and physical facilities.

Finally, we welcome warmly the "Dutch model" of national cooperation in graduate education, and remark that Bar-Ilan University, with its central and convenient location, is a natural prospective host for such a venture.

Chanukka Sameach!