



April 2011

Dear members of the International Committee for the Evaluation
of Industrial Engineering and Management Study Programs:

**Re: The Department of Industrial Engineering and
Management's Response to the Report of the Committee for Study
Programs**

Introduction

The faculty of the department of Industrial Engineering and Management, ORT Braude College, would like to thank the honorable committee members for their trust and appreciation of our institute and department throughout the entire report. In particular, we wish to express our gratitude for the following points:

- The acknowledgement of our excellence ("international best practice") in graduating outstanding engineers even though, when the students enroll, a wide range of preparedness is required by them to catch up with the department's level.
- The positive differentiation of our department by the merits of noticeable balance and quality of curriculum, industry-relevant education, and student-friendly atmosphere.
- The high score awarded to the attainment of our goals and mission.
- The warm evaluation of the faculty, adjuncts and administrative staff, regarding their qualities and commitment for excellence.
- The recognition of the excellent self-evaluation culture resulting in innovative activities.
- The employment of industrial engineering tools and techniques to plan and control the program.

We are also very grateful for the committee's valuable suggestions, such as exposing students to professional networks; the integration of an advisory committee composed of industry leaders and alumni; and the increase of English content. We have begun addressing these suggestions since the committee raised them during the visit. To name two: a mandatory course (Introduction to Marketing) is being taught in English; and faculty has been networking with alumni on several platforms (Facebook and LinkedIn).

For the remainder, we will address the improvement actions and discuss two points with which we do not completely agree.

Improvement Actions

We are very pleased that the committee concurs with our improvement actions, some of which have been implemented since the committee's visit. Hereinafter we indicate the improvements we have already undertaken and those we plan to implement.

1. **Expansion of IE&M core topics in the curriculum:** from the fall of 2011, the Project Management course will be mandatory. Supply chain and service system topics are planned to be more fully-covered in courses such as “The Supply Process: Operations and Control” and “Production Systems: Control and Management”. The content of these courses is now under revision.
2. **Development of a process to track excellent students and provide them with special counseling:** In addition to the current encouragement of excellent students, e.g., the “Excellent students program”, “Personal subject”, and “Internship in Academia”, we intend to develop a special counseling framework that will support students with the potential to excel.
3. **Strengthening the connections with employers of graduates and alumni:** An advisory board comprised of vice-presidents and senior executives, aimed at addressing the faculty’s future directions, is now established.
4. **Recruiting new faculty:** We have recruited two more faculty members (Dr. Doron Faran and Dr. Meir Tahan). We are in the process of recruiting one additional faculty member (Dr. Nirit Gavish, for whom the faculty council has already approved nomination). We are improving the student-to-faculty ratio. At this moment (4/2011) we have 15 faculty members and 612 students, therefore the student-faculty ratio is approximately 41-1. We intend to recruit additional faculty members in the future.
5. **Creation of individual offices for faculty members:** The College plans to extend the faculty’s working space. Since 3/2011 it has already partially expanded so that two faculty members already enjoy individual and comfortable offices (Prof. Arie Maharshak-Head of the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Center, Dr. Shuki Dror- Head of the Systems Engineering (M.Sc.) program). A new additional building is now under construction, due fall 2011. Upon completion, more faculty members will move to new private offices.

Disputed Topics

Master’s Degree

We are happy that, in general, the committee supports our efforts to augment the program by developing a Master’s degree in industrial engineering and management, as long as this degree is applied-oriented and without a thesis. We do believe that the applied-oriented Master’s degree will drive the department’s development and build up its capability. Moreover, as indicated in the committee’s report, our IE&M program is mature, stable, and is continuously being improved. However, whilst we share the opinion that a Master’s degree with thesis is too ambitious at this stage, we strongly believe that evolving towards a Master’s degree with thesis is merely a matter of time. The swift progress demonstrated by the IE&M department will undoubtedly develop into two parallel Master’s programs: the on-going, Master’s degree without a thesis and a new program where outstanding students will be offered a Master’s degree with thesis.

Research

We would like to comment that the alleged misalignment between the college’s and the department’s mission with regard to research is misleading. According to the self-evaluation guidelines, we were asked to formulate the mission of the IE&M study program. As a department, we wholeheartedly adopt the mission of the college, which clearly manifests the importance of research.

We are convinced that, in order to stay updated or professionally passionate, a faculty member should be strongly involved with up-to-date research topics. We have no doubt that con-

ducting research is a key success factor in our contemporary arena. Moreover, our attractiveness to young and brilliant researchers depends on the prospects of doing research. Furthermore, the promotion of faculty members to senior positions, particularly to those of 'Associate Professor' and 'Professor' is dependent on their research achievements.

Once again, we would like to express our profound gratitude for the committee's excellent and comprehensive work. The process of self-evaluation was of great significance to our department. The committee's evaluation report will serve as a model and a vital tool for continuous improvement in our department.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Tamar Gadrich

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Gadrich', written over a horizontal line.

Head of Industrial Engineering and Management Department
ORT Braude College
Karmiel, Israel