



31 November, 2012

**Responses to the Reports of the Committees for the Evaluation in Political Science and International Relations, and in Public Administration & Policy**

**Head of School Comments and Summary**

I am pleased to deliver our responses to the reports of the two committees that evaluated Government and Political Theory and International Relations (GOV&IR), and Public Administration and Policy (PA&P) at the University of Haifa.

Speaking on behalf of all of our faculty members, students and administrative staff, I feel that the committees took upon themselves a challenging task and have produced very useful and important reports. We are encouraged by these reports and believe that they testify to the level and impact of our school in both the national and international arenas. All of the School's faculty members, heads of Divisions and I have examined in the most serious manner the committee's suggestions for improvements. The pages that follow in this response are our summary of the major lessons that each division has derived from the committee's reports. .

I would like to commence with a brief overview the principal points in our responses and the core insights that we intend to implement at the level of the School as a result of the committee's reports.

**Public Administration & Policy**

1. We are working to enrich our program with Policy sciences courses. For this purpose we have recruited, during the past two years, two new faculty members with expertise in policy sciences (Dr. Beeri and Dr. Cohen). We hope this will improve our standing in the policy sciences arena.
2. Masters Thesis: the committee recommends that "the program should aim significantly to reduce the proportion of students writing masters theses". In fact, four students successfully complete the research track each year with a thesis. The overall number of graduate students in the Division each year is 120, (in all MPA programs). Thus, the ratio of research/non-research students is around 3%, which is a very reasonable proportion.
3. In response to the committee's recommendation regarding inclusion of a course in Economics, we have added a course to our current program dealing with Political Economy. This course includes both Micro and Macro aspects of economy for policy studies. We hope to offer an additional course in economics as well, in the coming years.
4. In 2010 we began to offer a quantitative research methods course that includes topics such as quantitative statistical analysis for policy analysis, some aspects of cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, and statistical decision analysis. This course coheres with the committee's recommendation for inclusion of a similar course in our program.
5. We encourage students from the regular program to take courses in other executive programs.

### **Government, Political theory and IR**

1. In general, we see much value in all of the committee's comments and intend to apply them with a view toward both streamlining processes and fostering academic progress in our School.
2. We are working toward building closer cooperation among the divisions and have already merged the departmental seminars. Most of these will be joint seminars; i.e., cooperative ventures among the divisions.
3. Internships for undergraduate students are a good idea. In fact, we have conducted such a program in the Division of Public Administration & Policy for several years with considerable success. Many of our Masters students are employed on a full time basis outside the university, and for this reason, the program should target the younger students. This should allow them the opportunity to work in government agencies, local municipalities and in NGOs, learning and gaining experience while cultivating networks for potential future employment.
4. We are working toward finding ideal solutions for the conduct of our methods courses. I may appoint a joint methods committee to consider this. The demands of teaching methods change each year with enrollment in the regular and special programs so that the best format for teaching the methods courses should be considered anew each year.
5. Structured PhD Programs (p.11). The program underwent a very extensive reform in 2008. This has had a significant positive effect on both the quality of students and research projects that emerged from the program. We believe, however, that many of the recommendations made by the committee are, in fact already in place, and we will work in order to ensure their further implementation during the coming years.

Finally, please allow me once more to thank the members of both committees that took part in our evaluation process; (PA&P - Prof. Steve Kelman, Chair, Prof. Mark Kleiman, Prof. David Nachmias, Prof. Michael Rothschild, and, GOV&IR - Prof. Thomas Risse, Chair, Prof. Benjamin Jerry Cohen, Prof. Abraham Diskin, Prof. Galia Golan; Prof. Ellen Immergut; and Prof. Robert Lieber) and Ms. Marissa Gross, the Coordinator of the Committees on behalf of the CHE. The work of the teams was insightful and constructive, and we highly appreciate the attention and recommendation suggested to us. We will work hard to implement these, maintain our academic standing, and improve our programs academically, practically and pedagogically in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Prof. Eran Vigoda-Gadot  
Chair, School of Political Sciences

## Responses to the reports of the Committees for the Evaluation in the Division Of Public Administration & Policy

We thank the committee members for their efforts and appreciate the insightful observations and suggestions provided in regard to our curriculum, procedures, and future development. We believe that the committee's report will generate a productive learning process in our division that will enable us to further develop our curriculum, research, and teaching strategies. Our staff members have reviewed the report and agree with many of its conclusions. We have already begun thinking and discussing ways with which we can promote the issues mentioned in your report and implement substantial changes.

1. Reducing the proportion of students writing master's thesis. We have tried to explain our different expectations from students enrolled to regular Masters Track and those in executive programs. As a research Institute employees we find it imperative to encourage our regular Masters students to write a research piece while enrollee to the executive ones are carefully directed to learn and exercise their learning materials.
2. We thank members of the committee for their approval and appreciation of our masters program and doctoral program.
3. Instruction in microeconomics. We have already recruited a new staff member with expertise in Economic thinking and conduct of inquiry. He offered new syllabi courses, starting coming 2011- 2012 Academic year, which emphasizes Microeconomic reasoning for Policy making.
4. Students should be exposed to some of the quantitative techniques of policy analysis. A basic course in Political Economy is part and parcel in our curricula. Unfortunately we were not able to find a proper teacher for the last two years. But, as pointed above we succeeded to recruit on a tenure track basis a new staff member who will conduct an obligatory course in Political Economy to all our students, starting this Academic year.
5. Cross-registration. We find this suggestion difficult to implement immediately. Although we realize some advantages of cross registration, its practice looks cumbersome for execution. More deliberations will be held shortly between our senior staff to further promote ways and accommodations needed.