



**Committee for the Evaluation of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences  
Studies**

**The College of Management Academic Studies  
Department of Behavioral Sciences**

**Evaluation Report**

**February 2009**



## **Chapter 1- Background**

At its meeting on October 31, 2006 the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences during the academic year 2006-2007.

Following this decision, the Minister of Education, who serves ex officio as the Chair of the CHE, appointed a committee for the evaluation of the academic quality of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences studies on April 29, 2008. On October 7 the committee was expanded and it currently comprises the following members<sup>1</sup>:

- **Prof. Susan Andersen, Department of Psychology, New York University-Committee Chair, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Victor Azarya, The Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Hebrew University (emeritus), Israel**
- **Prof. Yinon Cohen, Department of Sociology, Columbia University, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Susan Goldin-Meadow, Department of Psychology, University of Chicago, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Avishai Henik, Department of Psychology, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel**
- **Prof. Morris Moscovitch, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto, Canada**
- **Prof. Steven J. Sherman, Department of Psychology, Indiana University, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Varda Shoham, Department of Psychology, University of Arizona, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Seymour Spilerman, Department of Sociology, Columbia University, U.S.A**
- **Prof. Sidney Strauss - Chief Scientist at the Israeli Ministry of Education (previously- Department of Psychology and School of Education, Tel Aviv University), Israel**
- **Prof. Barbara Tversky, Department of Psychology, Stanford University, U.S.A**

**Ms. Alisa Elon- Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.**

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the fact that there were 12 departments undergoing evaluation, committee members divided the visits amongst themselves.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to submit the following documents to the CHE:

1. A final report for each of the institutions which would include an evaluation of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences study programs, the Committee's findings and recommendations.
2.
  - 2.1 A general report regarding the status of the evaluated field of study in Israeli institutions of higher education.
  - 2.2 Recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

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

The first stage of the quality assessment process consisted of self-evaluation, including the preparation of a self-evaluation report by the institutions under evaluation. This process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's guidelines as specified in the document entitled "The Self-Evaluation Process: Recommendations and Guidelines" (December 2006).

## **Chapter 2-Committee Procedures**

During May – June 2008 Committee members conducted full-day visits to five of the twelve institutions whose Psychology and Behavioral Science study programs the committee was requested to examine.

During these visits, the Committee met with the relevant officials at each institution, as well as with faculty members, students and alumni, and also conducted a tour of the campus.

***This report deals with the Department of Behavioral Sciences at the College of Management - Academic Studies.***

The Committee's visit to the College of Management took place on May 29, 2008.

The following members of the committee participated in the visit to the College of Management:

- **Prof. Susan Andersen- Committee Chair**
- **Prof. Varda Shoham**
- **Prof. Seymour Spilerman**
- **Prof. Sidney Strauss**
- **Prof. Barbara Tversky**

The schedule of the visit, including the list of participants representing the institution, is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The members of the committee thank the management of the institution and the Department of Behavioral Sciences for the self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the Committee during its visit.

## **Chapter 3- Evaluation of the Department of Behavioral Sciences at the College of Management**

### **Background**

The College of Management Academic Studies was founded in 1977.

The institution's self-evaluation report states that at the time it was written there were a total of 10,630 students at the college of whom 9,010 were studying for a BA degree and 1,620 for an MA degree.

The Department of Behavioral Sciences was established in 1994. It is comprised of three professional divisions: communication; organizational behavior and human resources management; and criminology and law enforcement.

In 1997 the Department was accredited by the Council for Higher Education to grant B.A. degrees in the behavioral sciences.

According to data provided by the Central Bureau of Statistics, the total number of Behavioral Science students in 2006 was 822.

### **Mission and Goals**

As the self-evaluation document indicates, the college seeks to provide an opportunity to gain a college degree to applicants who had been unable to secure admission to a university or who are seeking to begin BA-level studies later in life or who wish to study locally. The committee applauds those aims. Specifically, the Department of Behavioral Sciences strives to integrate studies from fields in the social sciences, humanities, and human sciences. The mission statement indicates that the BA degree is "designed primarily to provide an academic foundation" without emphasizing any specific professional orientation (self-evaluation p. 12). The goals of the program include providing familiarity with the approaches of the traditional disciplines, promoting interdisciplinary thinking, providing academic requisites for study in graduate programs, and broadening the range of a student's employment prospects (p. 20). The committee sees these objectives as appropriate, though challenging to implement.

Faculty who met with the committee further described the mission as combining academic study with practical experience in a specialized area – in one of three professional "clusters" – criminology, organizational behavior, and media studies. The committee applauds the aim to integrate academic with career-oriented studies.

The self-evaluation document states that central to the department's mission is its intent to provide integrated, interdisciplinary training in the behavioral sciences. The idea is to implement this through team teaching and by formulating courses that bring to bear insights from several academic disciplines on the same issues. While the committee values interdisciplinary programs, it is concerned with how the program is implemented.

In detail, the intent is for the BA-level studies to proceed from introductory courses to more advanced ones in a specialization and career line (a cluster), and the cluster studies are delayed until the second year of study to allow exploration of various fields. The delay in cluster studies seems reasonable to the committee; however, the core of behavioral science that students are exposed to prior to cluster studies is not as clear as it should be, nor does that exposure include an Introductory Psychology course which should be required, both because it is essential to a behavioral sciences curriculum and because it is fundamental for more advanced study. The committee sees the delay in cluster studies as sensible, but sees the core (pre-specialization) curriculum as less well thought out and implemented than it should be. In practice, many students use the program to prepare for graduate work in the helping professions, and yet this is absent from the mission statement, it defines no cluster, and students do not have systematic exposure to psychology in the first year.

### **The Program of Study**

According to the self-evaluation document, the program for a BA degree in Behavioral Sciences offered by the Department of Behavioral Sciences aims to provide students with a solid basis in the disciplines of psychology, sociology, and anthropology in a way that emphasizes interdisciplinary coursework. The self-study indicates that the curriculum proceeds from foundation courses in each of the disciplines to coursework that is interdisciplinary, integrative, and in some cases team-taught. Students then choose from among three specialized clusters within the program: Criminology and Criminal Justice; Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management; and Communications and Media Studies. Courses in the latter two clusters are staffed largely by faculty in other departments in the college, e.g., from the School of Business Administration and the School of Media Studies, as well as outside faculty. The department also offers a voluntary experiential learning track that integrates a year of part-time community service into the program -- for example, working with the chronically mentally ill -- although none of the tracks is focused on psychology. The experiential component of the program is enriched by the inclusion of outside faculty working in the relevant fields. Participating students appear to place high value on what they learn in the experiential component of the program.

In the committee's view, the clusters seem largely quite well developed, and have reasonable breadth, although they do not offer the level of exposure and depth that would be obtained with a BA in the specific fields. The advantage of the "cluster" approach -- from the students' point of view and the committee concurs -- is that it permits those who are uncertain about their major an opportunity to take a broad range of courses before choosing a specialization, in the form of a cluster. The somewhat delayed specialization leaves time and room for core courses prior to specialization for students to explore their interests and gain methodological and statistical knowledge. The committee concurs with this overall approach but believes that the core introductory courses should be more comprehensive. The specializations should build on the core, permitting students to be reasonably well-prepared for the job market in their chosen field (their cluster), and this seemed to be the case so far as the committee could see. Based on its meetings, the committee's impression is that the Criminology cluster is

particularly well regarded, and that students in this track are readily admitted to graduate programs in criminology after they have graduated with a BA in Behavioral Sciences. The Organizational Behavior cluster seems well established as well. The Communications and Media cluster, however, seems to be less well developed, particularly given that it appears to offer no coursework on television, film, or alternative media.

It is the committee's view that the purpose of the initial core courses, before the cluster studies, should be better specified and developed. The self-evaluation document does not specify any set of content courses that is required at the beginning of students' education as the basic core. Given that students take mainly psychology courses, psychology seems to the committee to be the de facto core of the program. Even if psychology is not explicitly defined as core to behavioral science in the department, the self-evaluation document claims that the department's students are trained in psychology in a manner equivalent to a BA in psychology. In the committee's view, this claim is not well-supported. There are no courses in perception, cognition, learning and memory, social psychology, personality, or biological bases of behavior. The committee agrees that psychology courses can readily be used as core behavioral science courses, and believes, in addition, that the psychology curriculum should be offered in a more systematic fashion so that it provides a more extensive and accurate view of this rather wide-ranging discipline (which ranges from cognitive and social neuroscience to social and abnormal psychology). Minimally, the department should offer a course in introduction to psychology, and should use a standard, scientifically grounded introductory psychology text to teach it.

According to the administration, many students continue to graduate school and become professionals in careers based on the psychology or the other behavioral sciences. For both those reasons, entry to graduate school and continuing professional education, proficiency in reading professional literature in English is essential. The best way to attain proficiency in reading professional literature in English is for at least one and preferably more of the core courses use a comprehensive, up-to-date textbook in English and for at least one and preferably more core courses assign seminal research articles in English.

In addition, the two other disciplines that the department aims to encompass, sociology and anthropology, are given only a rather cursory exposure. From the committee's point of view, it seems important that an introductory course in sociology and anthropology (perhaps a combined course) be included in the curriculum so that students are assured a systematic introductory exposure to each. In short, systematic introductory course on sociology and anthropology should precede or be concurrent with students' cluster studies.

Finally, the elective interdisciplinary courses should provide greater coverage of current academic research in the different disciplines and should include original readings that emphasize methodological rigor. Beyond making these courses more sophisticated, it would be most valuable for students if some advanced courses were explicitly integrative showing how different disciplines and perspectives view the same problem,

perhaps by team teaching. The self evaluation indicates that there is now some team teaching which should allow these courses and others to be explicitly integrative and more sophisticated, both methodologically and statistically (relative to introductory courses).

The department indicated to the committee in our meetings that many graduates of this department with a BA in Behavioral Science are admitted to MA and PhD programs in Israeli universities. Although we did not see the data on this, if it is so it would suggest that the department's students are regarded well enough by other institutions to allow for graduate admission. Because the department serves a clientele often seeking a "second chance" for university studies, this would be heartening. The program also states that it aims to prepare students for the labor market, a goal not necessarily shared by universities in Israel. Based on the committee's impressions and the self-evaluation report, the college seems to do this well.

The committee was impressed by students' enthusiasm for the supportive atmosphere in the college and the engaging and helpful quality of the teaching. On the other hand, given the particular academic disciplines to which the department indicates they are exposing students, the committee is not convinced that the department is providing a sufficiently rigorous and comprehensive undergraduate curriculum, even in light of the special needs of an interdisciplinary program. In particular, while the department's materials emphasize the centrality of psychology to the program, students receive inadequate exposure to the most important substance of the discipline. This field would provide a solid core for studies toward a BA in behavioral science, particularly with the beefed up curriculum the committee views as needed, but it does not seem to currently do so. In addition, there should be an opportunity for students to gain experience in designing and conducting research as part of their BA-level studies in behavioral science. Satisfying these needs requires not only changes in the program but also faculty recruitment in basic areas of psychology (e.g., cognitive psychology, social psychology) seems necessary.

### *The Curriculum*

The cluster approach appears to serve this interdisciplinary program reasonably well. In terms of the course offerings in each cluster:

**Management, organizational behavior, human resources.** The committee is of the view that the course offerings in this cluster are adequate for the purpose of BA level training for human resource and management specialists.

**Criminology and criminal justice cluster.** The elective courses and seminars offered in this specialization are currently limited to the rehabilitation of drug addicts. The committee recommends an expansion of elective offerings to cover specialties such as family violence, youth delinquency, program evaluation, and the workings of corrections facilities. The committee was concerned that the quality of this track depends on the excellence of one star faculty member who is approaching retirement. Thus, maintaining the quality of this specialty poses some challenge to the Department.

**Communications cluster.** The committee views the course offerings in this cluster as thin. While no one on the committee is an expert in this area, the committee is of the view that in the modern age any media studies program should have more than one course on television and probably also courses on the film industry and on alternative media formats stimulated by the internet.

**Required and elective courses.** The committee applauds the inclusion of two semesters of statistics, two semesters of research methods, and a course in tests and measurement among the required classes. While such courses often meet resistance from students, they are increasingly necessary for successful careers in public and business organizations, and critical for successful graduate study in psychology, sociology and business administration. The methodologies introduced in these classes are increasingly used in the subject areas of the department's clusters; indeed, the coursework in the clusters should draw upon statistical procedures, where appropriate.

However, while we commend the inclusion of two statistics courses in the required curriculum, the way they are taught -- as evidenced by the assigned readings -- is insufficiently rigorous. These two statistics classes use the text "Statistics for non-statisticians." While this could serve as a supplementary text, the main text should provide a more thorough introduction to the subject. Further, it appears that the year-long course concludes with a consideration of two-variable regression, even though it is now customary for an introductory course to cover multiple regression; indeed, a consideration of advanced topics such as heteroskedasticity, dummy dependent variables, and factor analysis is now common in good undergraduate courses. The content of the statistics courses should be upgraded accordingly.

Likewise, while we commend the inclusion of methods courses in the required curriculum, the level at which they are taught -- as evidenced by the assigned readings -- is also insufficiently rigorous. Concerns are similar about both the research methods classes -- for which neither a text nor reading assignments are listed on the syllabi -- and about the tests and measures course, for which no syllabus was provided. Overall, proper evaluation of evidence is critical to an understanding of the subject matter of the clusters, to psychology, and to effective functioning in the careers for which students are preparing. Students would learn this subject matter best by exposure to upgraded course materials that provide in-depth coverage of the topics that are standard in undergraduate methods courses at quality institutions -- and importantly, by having experience designing, conducting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing up research (in a laboratory course format). Such a course is greatly needed. If in addition, providing students the opportunity to work with faculty on their research projects could contribute greatly to their expertise and confidence that they can do and evaluate research.

Aside from the formal clusters, the department offers considerable coursework in psychology, presumably as a core basis to the interdisciplinary program, although this is not specified as such in the self-evaluation document. A number of students in the program utilize these classes as an entry to graduate study in psychology. Moreover, the department apparently seeks to make a serious acquaintance with psychology

central to a student's training regardless of students' specialized interests. The committee is in agreement with the idea that psychology can readily be conceived as core to the program, but sees the course offerings and the available faculty as insufficient for providing an appropriate introduction to the paradigms and theoretical approaches in the discipline.

In terms of curriculum, achieving excellence in pre-cluster core courses will require solving several pressing problems. First, the department offers no course in Introductory Psychology that provides students with a comprehensive overview of the full range of the discipline, and such a course is essential for students to understand the options the field provides. It also offers no course in Social Psychology, which should introduce students to basic theory and experimental research in domains ranging from social perception, stereotyping, prejudice, and intergroup bias to motivation, emotion, and social identity. This field is central to psychology and basic to understanding phenomena addressed in subsequent courses and in cluster studies, not to mention to students' career goals. Finally, the course the department offers under the title, "Learning, Development, and Socialization" focuses almost entirely on psychoanalytic (or psychodynamic) theory, i.e., on Freudian and neo-Freudian thought, and thus excludes learning processes (classical and instrumental conditioning, mechanisms of social learning), in spite of the term "learning" in the course title. It even excludes developmental psychology, i.e., cognitive development (language, numeracy, memory function, reasoning), and socio-emotional development (attachment, theory of mind). A modern, evidence-based course in Developmental Psychology is needed instead.

Beyond this, the basic core course, "Biology for Behavioral Sciences," is incomplete and outdated, focusing almost entirely on anatomical structure and the physiology of the nervous system when it should instead cover research in cognitive, social, developmental, and emotional neuroscience, including important work on neuroplasticity. It should also include contemporary findings in another active and influential field, behavioral genetics.

On another level, the department has no procedure to ensure that some core courses use a comprehensive, up-to-date textbook in English and this needs to be remedied. Students will be better prepared for the modern workforce and for graduate training if they have experience with textbooks written in English. Ideally, at least one and preferably more advanced courses should require key articles published in English.

Finally, many electives in the department are close to pop psychology in subject matter rather than examining specialized areas of psychology or sociology that build systematically on earlier "core" courses. Readings in these classes (e.g., "Back-packing as a rite of passage") tend to lack scientific basis and thus need to be thoroughly revamped or replaced by solid advanced classes. Moreover, as students noted in our meetings, there are multiple courses similar topics, e.g. "Love," "Intimate Relationships and Marriage," and "Violence in Intimate Partner Relationships," and these should be combined (or all but one dropped). Students require a deep acquaintance with the established disciplines along with specialized courses that are integrative.

The department also does not appear to offer research seminars or practica that provide hands-on faculty-guided research experience. Students need to learn to develop interesting research questions and testable hypotheses, to design a study, to collect and analyze data, and to write a research report. This is easily done in a laboratory course designed for this purpose. In each discipline of behavioral science, BA-level students must assimilate and use what they have learned in practical ways. The program does have a two semester "research requirement," formulated as a seminar in which students develop skills in "research, critical thinking, writing, and presenting convincing arguments," but this needs to be upgraded to reflect the current state of the science in each discipline and in the behavioral sciences as a whole, while requiring hands-on empirical research.

The department will very likely to need to take a year to redesign the curriculum (and to select comprehensive state-of-the-art textbooks), along the above lines, and to then implement these changes within the following two years. In addition, because such changes will also impact students who entered the program with different expectations, they will need to be kept abreast of changes.

### **Faculty and Teaching**

The core faculty are diverse in terms of their training and academic history. By the department's own account, they represent 25 sub-disciplines in social and behavioral sciences. Some had successful academic careers in major universities prior to joining the faculty of the college, while others started their careers (or nearly so) at the college.

The core faculty are appointed to one of two tracks: Research or teaching. Faculty on the research track are expected to continue to conduct and publish research, while those on the teaching track are required to teach more courses. For faculty on the academic track (ranks: lecturer, senior lecturer, associate and full professor) research is the major criterion for promotion. For faculty on the teaching/practitioner track (ranks: teacher and senior teacher) criteria for promotion are less clear. In both cases the initial appointments are for 12-months. During its meetings with the various faculty group the committee has learned that after the initial 2-year period, 3-year and then 5-year contracts may be offered to faculty with an established track record as productive researchers and effective teachers. During its meetings, the committee came to understand that periodic reviews of faculty are undertaken (based on research productivity as well as on teaching evaluations), prior to each renewal. At some point the Department Head and the Appointments Committee may decide to extend long term contracts to highly-deserving faculty.

Finally, as other colleges in Israel, the College of Management handles promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer internally, but promotion to associate and full professor needs to go through CHE. This leaves junior faculty unclear about the timeline for their promotion because the timing of promotions is not set and junior faculty spend varying numbers of years prior to promotion to lecturer or to senior lecturer. Moreover, senior faculty are puzzled by what they see as requirements and criteria for promotion that do not fit with their mission as a teaching institution rather than a university (i.e., a count of

number of publication that is similar to that of research-focused Universities). The committee recognizes that greater clarity and transparency in CHE's criteria and procedures would be helpful, and the committee recommends that the department and administration at The College of Management also institute more transparency for the promotions that they control internally.

The teaching needs of the department are augmented by adjunct faculty whose 8-month appointments are renewable each year. Many faculty, especially those on the teaching track, are also active practitioners in their teaching area, which enhances their ability to engage students in the material, serve as role models, and make connections with potential employers when students go on the job market.

Although faculty on the research track are, or have been, engaged in research, they have rarely published in high-impact journals, and their productivity rates do not compare to those of faculty at the universities. This is understandable, as their teaching loads are higher than those of university professors, and fits with the stated mission of the institution.

On the whole, faculty indicated that they were committed to the department and to the college. Morale seemed high. Students and graduates reported that the faculty tend to be helpful, open, respectful, and accessible in person, by e-mail, and by cell phone. Moreover, students noted the high quality teaching in the content areas and the help of faculty in shaping and focusing them on their career goals.

The department's teaching committee is highly involved in decision making about the curriculum. Teaching quality is enhanced by workshops covering topics such as how to prepare a syllabus, how to use body language in teaching, and how to manage classroom assignments. Given these special efforts, we were surprised to see that the quality of the syllabi vary widely. Some syllabi are structured well with a clear conceptual sequence and literature that is scientific and up-to-date, while others are general and popular rather than scientific and/or contain readings that do not correspond to the course label. The committee's view is that the syllabi for all courses should be reviewed by the teaching committee to ensure both adequate coverage of the specified field and the academic rigor of the assigned readings.

### **Students and Learning**

Acceptance to the Department of Behavioral Sciences is on the basis of a matriculation score of 85, or matriculation plus 550 psychometric test, or a weighted average of at least 83 on matriculation and psychometric, or a B.A. or higher from a recognized institute of higher education. There is affirmative action for students with special needs, such as older students and students with learning disabilities, handicaps, and psychological or emotional problems. There is also a special Open Door program for Ethiopian students. These students receive special attention and assistance throughout their studies: Nearly all who apply to the program are accepted--approximately 82% in 2007. Some scholarship help is available.

The dropout rate ranges from 6-13%, mostly after the first year. Discussions indicated that this low dropout rate is largely due to the extensive counseling provided to students. However, the committee is concerned that high academic standards be maintained in the program. While we applaud the provision of a "second chance" to students, it is critical that academic standards not be relaxed for the purpose of permitting poorly performing students to achieve the BA.

According to a survey of students conducted by the department, students chose the program because of its teaching reputation, proximity to home, promise for job preparation, and because they were not accepted by a university. The ten undergraduates we met with confirmed the survey results about the reasons for choosing the College. Some added that they chose the Behavioral Sciences Department because they were vaguely interested in human behavior and perhaps therapy. Both the undergraduates and the five graduates we met with were enthusiastic about the program and the opportunities it provided them. They felt that the teaching was of high quality and relevant to their lives, and that the professors and assistants were available to them.

According to the survey which was returned by 250 alumni, half go to graduate school and 70% of these either have completed or are studying for an MA. Some 31% of the alumni who continued their studies attended a university, mainly in Israel; 25% chose to continue at the College of Management for graduate studies. The principle fields of graduate study were business administration and organizational behavior/human resources. The majority of the graduates of the department are engaged in private sector employment.

## **Research**

According to the self-evaluation report, "the Department of Behavioral Sciences was not conceived as a research oriented department" (p. 109), but it now places high value on faculty research while still focusing on teaching. Research proposals are occasionally submitted to external agencies and some of these have been funded. The college also encourages faculty attendance at conferences and provides travel support for this purpose.

The committee is fully aware of the distinction between research oriented institutions (universities) and teaching colleges in terms of their primary mission. However, as indicated, BA-level education in Behavioral Science requires hands on exposure to research methods so that students learn the nuts and bolts of the science. Behavioral Science education at the BA-level cannot be pursued in contemporary terms, in the committee's view, without giving students the opportunity to take part in research. For this reason, the committee applauds efforts to increase research among faculty, and it is crucial that the department do more to ensure that students are able to gain research experience during their BA-level studies. In particular, it is critical that students are required take an organized laboratory course early on that provides them with basic BA-level exposure to the nuts and bolts of behavioral science research – within a single laboratory course. In addition, it would be valuable if excellent students had the

opportunity to serve as research assistants (i.e., interns) in faculty labs or on faculty projects to further solidify their education and to make them more competitive when they graduate.

It is perhaps worth acknowledging that there seems to be some ambivalence in the department about what role research plays or should play. As a department in a college, its primary mission is to deliver excellent instruction with a challenging and high-quality curriculum. The faculty composition and their teaching loads are largely commensurate with this focus. On the other hand, in meetings with representatives of the college and some senior faculty, the committee noted a commitment to research and the desire that the college become a university with PhD offerings, which would require considerable faculty commitment to research. Moreover, young faculty with PhD's from training programs that value research hope that a transition to a PhD-granting university will help them maintain their own research programs. A number of faculty are thus actively engaged in research. The committee's view is that the college should establish more research training for undergraduates in the department and this will indirectly enhance the research excellence of its faculty as well.

Indeed, in line with the goal of transforming the college into a university, hiring policy appears now to favor researchers. Over time, this will have the effect of reducing both the size and importance of the practitioner side of the faculty, whose ethos and curriculum are oriented toward practice and teaching. The committee's view is that the department should take care to continue to focus on achieving excellence in educating undergraduate level, by expanding and deepening the undergraduate curriculum, while making sure to provide undergraduates with substantive research training in the behavioral sciences, where possible linked to faculty research. Teaching is the crucial task of the college and giving students research training (in faculty research) will facilitate this aim. Moreover, although the committee recognizes the value of a well conceived graduate program both the undergraduate education and to research engagement by faculty and undergraduates, it is the committee's view that strengthening the existing BA-level training in the department is what the department should do before moving to open MA Programs. Teaching in the current program and upgrading it should be the priority rather than investing in graduate studies and seeking to achieve university status.

### **Infrastructure and Facilities**

Overall, the campus is an attractive, modern facility that has excellent classrooms for the department.

There is no research infrastructure for psychology or for other fields, nor other facilities to support research, including no research laboratories. At the same time, the kind of research conducted by faculty members does not necessarily require laboratories, as it mainly involves survey methods or theoretical and library research. It appears that few, if any, faculty in the department run experiments, which would diminish the need for laboratories even for research-active faculty. Some lab space is likely to be needed in order to provide undergraduates needed research experience.

## **Recommendations and Suggestions**

The committee's meetings were informative and valuable, and there is much to appreciate about the department's mission and esprit de corps. We note our recommendations below for enhancing the quality of the department and the undergraduate education it provides. Points are ordered largely by their priority, although some of issues are of equal importance and urgency (e.g., should be begun or even completed in the first year). On balance, we suggest a 12 to 24 month window for completing the recommended improvements, in some cases with a follow up at 36 months. The committee's rationale for the recommendations and suggestions is above. Overall, the recommendations made are offered in an effort to help advance the Department's goal of achieving excellence at the undergraduate level while satisfying its specific educational mission. A summary of the recommendations is below.

**1. Improvements to the curriculum.** The committee recommends that the department revamp its teaching in the following areas:

A. Methodological and statistical training:

- i. Introductory year course in statistics: The committee recommends that this course be offered at a level that is comparable with similar offerings at universities in their psychology departments and in the social sciences. A textbook that is appropriately rigorous should be assigned.
- ii. Courses on research methods and on tests and measurements. The committee makes the same recommendations above (A.i) with respect to making this course more rigorous, up-to-date, and parallel to what's offered at universities.
- iii. A strategic plan for developing these two courses should be formulated within one year and the plan should be implemented in the second year.

B. Research

- i. Students should have an opportunity to gain obtain experience in designing and conducting research in order to better understand the various behavioral-science disciplines. The committee thus recommends that a faculty-guided, hands-on course be instituted that requires students to design a study, collect data, and analyze the data. Such a laboratory course, or otherwise integrating such methodological experience into a required content course is essential to adequate BA-level training in behavioral science.
- ii. The committee also suggests that, given how critical research experience is to the quality of BA-level education in behavioral science, the department seek to provide a handful (or two) of the most excellent students each year the opportunity to gain immersed research experience as part of their education – by serving as a research assistant for a faculty member on project in his or her area of expertise, to the degree that this is feasible (in addition to B.i) .
- iii. A strategic plan for developing the courses (in B.i) should be formulated

within one year and the planned curriculum modifications implemented in the second year.

### C. Cluster studies.

- i. Criminology and criminal justice cluster: The committee recommends an expansion of elective offerings in the criminal justice cluster to cover specialties such as family violence, delinquency, and the workings of corrections facilities. Each of these areas is important to criminal justice and the relevant behavioral science is well developed. In short, the committee recommends that a broader, more thorough exposure to the field be offered to students and that this include adding these courses.
- ii. Communications and media cluster: The committee recommends that the precise aims and curriculum of this cluster be better reformulated and that students are given more systematic exposure to the field represented by the cluster. In short, the committee recommends that additional courses be added to this cluster on television, film, and alternative media. Otherwise, this hardly seems to be a cluster on media and communications.
- iii. The Organizational Behavior and Human Resources cluster: The committee suggests that this area take the opportunity to reconsider the purposes and excellence of its curriculum and to make improvements as needed.
- iv. A strategic plan for developing the courses in each of these clusters should be formulated within one year and the planned curriculum additions should be implemented in the second year.

### D Core Introductory Coursework

- i. Content in Biology
  - a. The committee recommends that the course, "Biology for Behavioral Sciences," be re-organized to cover function, as well as recent developments in genetics.
  - b. A strategic plan for developing this course should be formulated within one year and the planned curriculum upgrade should be implemented in the second year.
- ii. Content in Psychology
  - a. The committee recommends that the department add the comprehensive, science-based course, Introduction to Psychology, to the curriculum as a basic course in psychology and use a standard, up-to-date textbook for Introductory Psychology, preferably a text in English.
  - b. The committee also recommends that the department add an introductory research-based course in social psychology to the required courses students take, again with a standard, up-to-date textbook for this field.
  - c. The committee recommends as well that the course, "Learning, Development, and Socialization," be brought up to date to reflect the

diversity of current thought in the field, rather than being largely on psychoanalytic theory, and should use a standard text book covering both cognitive and social-emotional development.

d. The committee suggests that the department eliminate redundancies among advanced seminars, combining seminars on closely related topics into one (such as “Love,” “Intimate Relationships and Marriage,” and “Violence in Intimate Partner Relationships”), and ensuring that they are grounded in scientific evidence.

e. A strategic plan for developing these new courses and for upgrading the others should be formulated within one year and the planned curriculum additions should be implemented in the second and third years.

### iii. Other Core Content

a. As noted, the committee believes that the department should ensure that students are exposed to coursework that reflects the disciplines the department says it encompasses, i.e., not only psychology, but also sociology and anthropology. The department needs to provide a more rigorous, cutting-edge introduction to these disciplines. To enable the truly integrative approach in which the program seeks to train its students, students must be given a solid, contemporary, and scientific background in the core disciplines of behavioral science that are to be integrated. The committee thus recommends that an introductory course in sociology and anthropology (perhaps combined as one introductory course) should be part of what students learn as the core of the field before (or simultaneous with) their cluster studies.

Part of a rigorous, up-to-date program that intends to prepare students for graduate school and professional life in the behavioral sciences and especially in psychology is proficiency in reading professional literature in English. To attain this proficiency, at least one and preferably more core courses, especially in psychology, should adopt a comprehensive textbook in English and at least one and preferably more advanced courses should assign seminal articles in English.

b. A strategic plan for developing such an introductory course, and possibly other courses, representing these disciplines, should be formulated within one year and the planned curriculum addition(s) should be implemented in the second year.

## F Integrative Courses

i. The committee also recommends that the department ensure that advanced courses educate students in the interdisciplinary approach and do so rigorously and systematically. That is, advanced courses should explicitly provide an interdisciplinary perspective by demonstrating how different disciplines view the same problem – perhaps using team-teaching by two faculty in different disciplines. One or two such courses should be required during the student’s last

year. Advanced courses should explicitly integrate disciplines allowing students to see how the different disciplines address a particular problem. Advanced courses should also take advantage of what is taught in the introductory courses, so that the introductory core studies speak to material that will be learned in the specialized clusters, and the integrative courses would bring it all together, doing the interdisciplinary job more systematically than it is currently done.

ii. The committee recommends that the methodologies and statistics introduced in the earlier required classes be integrated into substantive advanced courses in the cluster areas, particularly in terms of assigned readings and discussion, and for example, some original journal articles that students read (as required reading).

iii. A strategic plan should be developed in the first year for developing such integrative courses, probably by beefing up of the integrative content of existing courses, and possibly arranging that some are team taught, and this plan should then be implemented in the second

#### G Self-evaluation of Syllabi

i. The committee recommends that the syllabi of all courses be reviewed periodically by the department's teaching committee to ensure that an appropriate level of academic rigor, especially in the kinds of courses recommended herein and in other essential courses.

ii. A strategic plan for undertaking this kind of review, periodically, should be developed in the first year and used in the second year to evaluate the quality of the course additions and course upgrades.

## 2. Faculty Hiring

A. It is the committee's view that new faculty, trained in the core disciplines, will be needed to upgrade the basic curriculum to which students are exposed before they begin the cluster studies. The committee recommends that the department prepare a strategic plan that specifies the type of faculty needed that the department seeks to hire to remedy weaknesses of the program, particularly in psychology and consistent with the issues raised herein.

i. The committee recommends that the administration and department resolve to make at least one full-time hire in psychology and one part-time hire in psychology as well to implement the strategic plan.

ii. A strategic plan for making these hires (securing funding, defining the search in accord with teaching needs detailed herein, and planning search logistics) should be done in the first year.

iii. The plan should be implemented in the second and third years.

B. As noted, the committee recommends that the department make these senior faculty hires, and that these hires should be tightly connected to the re-organization and

improvement of the undergraduate curriculum and teaching, fulfilling the needs detailed above. For example:

- i. New faculty instructors should demonstrate knowledge in and ability to teach the *core* courses in the revamped curriculum.
- ii. The foci of new instructors' research should be considered according to the teaching needs of the department and how they contribute to teaching needs (in hiring and promotion).
- iii. The department should conduct periodic evaluation of course materials by experts from each of the disciplines to ensure they are contemporary, up-to-date, and rigorous.

C. The committee further suggests that the department consider how it will be able to maintain the quality of the criminology cluster when its star faculty member retires.

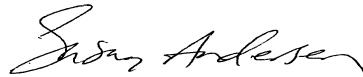
### **3. Alumni**

Finally, the committee was pleased to see that the department made the wise decision to conduct an alumni survey, and the committee recommends that the department follow up on this with another alumni survey. As the survey conducted already indicated, such surveys can provide valuable information about graduates, most notably about jobs taken and subsequent education, allowing such information to be tracked over time and feedback to be gathered from previous students, which is crucial for planning purposes.

A. The committee recommends that the department develop a strategic plan for conducting another alumni survey in the second year, implementing this plan in the third year.

B. In addition, the committee suggests that the department expand what it has done in contacting alumni to actively build an alumni culture, which can be valuable to the institution and the department. One purpose is to keep track of what students end up doing with their education. Another is to actively create ways to keep students involved with the college, e.g., through a newsletter or through communities of graduates organized by department (such as in terms of area of employment or geographic region). Alumni groups often offer employment opportunities to other alumni and to students soon to graduate, and they financially support their alma maters as well, making it very much in the college's interest to do as much as is feasible to foster ongoing alumni contacts.

**Signed By:**



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**Prof. Susan Andersen**  
**Committee Chair**



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**Prof. Varda Shoham**



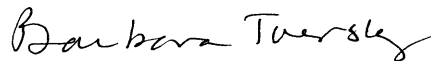
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**Prof. Seymour Spilerman**



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**Prof. Sidney Strauss**



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**Prof. Barbara Tversky**

# APPENDIX 1



18/11/2008  
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**Professor Susan M. Andersen**  
**Professor of Psychology**  
**Director, Doctoral Program in Social Psychology**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**New York University**  
**USA**

Dear Professor Andersen,

The State of Israel undertook an ambitious project when the Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) established a quality assessment and assurance system for Israeli higher education. Its stated goals are: 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. Involvement of world-renowned academicians in this process is essential, particularly as our nation reaches maturity in its 60<sup>th</sup> year.

This most important initiative reaches out to scientists in the international arena in a national effort to meet the critical challenges that confront the Israeli higher educational system today. The formulation of international evaluation committees represents an opportunity to express our common sense of concern and to assess the current and future status of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. It also establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process among scientists around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial endeavor. It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as the Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Studies.

The composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Susan Andersen - Chair, Prof. Victor Azarya, Prof. Yinon Cohen, Prof. Susan Goldin-Meadow, Prof. Avishai Henik, Prof. Morris Moscovitch, Prof. Steven J. Sherman, Prof. Varda Shoham, Prof. Seymour Spilerman, Prof. Sidney Strauss and Prof. Barbara Tversky.

Ms. Alisa Elon will coordinate the Committee's activities.



In your capacity as a member of the Evaluation Committee, you will be requested to function in accordance with the enclosed appendix.

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

Sincerely,

**Professor YuK-Tamir**  
**Minister of Education**

**and Chairperson of the Council for Higher Education**

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

cc: Ms. Riki Mendelzvaig, Secretary of the Council for Higher Education  
Ms. Michal Neumann, Head of the Quality Assessment Unit  
Ms. Alisa Elon, Committee Coordinator

## **Appendix to the Letter of Appointment for Evaluation Committees (Study Programs)**

### **1. General**

On June 3, 2003 the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to establish a system for quality assessment and assurance in Israeli higher education. Within this framework, study-programs are to be evaluated every six years and institutions every eight years. The quality assessment system came into effect in the academic year of 2004-2005.

The main objectives of the quality assessment activity are:

- To enhance the quality of higher education in Israel;
- To create an awareness within institutions of higher education in Israel of the importance of quality evaluation and to develop internal self-evaluation mechanisms on a regular basis;
- To provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel;
- To ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

**It is not the CHE's intention to rank the institutions of higher education according to the results of the quality assessment processes. The evaluation committee should refrain from formal comparisons.**

### **2. The Work of the Evaluation Committee**

- 2.1 The committee shall hold meetings, as needed, before visiting the institution, in order to evaluate the material received.
- 2.2 The committee shall visit the institution and the academic unit being evaluated – if possible - within 3-4 months of receiving the self-evaluation report. The purpose of the visit is to verify and update the information submitted in the self-evaluation report, clarify matters where necessary, inspect the educational environment and facilities first hand, etc. During the visit, the committee will meet with the heads of the institution, faculty members, students, the administrative staff, and any other persons it considers necessary.
- 2.3 In a meeting at the beginning of the visit, the committee will meet with the heads of the institution (president/rector, dean), the heads of the academic unit and the study-programs, in order to explain the purpose of the visit. At the end

of the visit, the committee will summarize its findings, and formulate its recommendations.

- 2.4 The duration of the visits (at least one full day) will be coordinated with the chairperson of the committee.
- 2.5 Following the visit, the committee will write its final report, including its recommendations, which will be delivered to the institution and the academic unit for their response.
- 2.6 In the event that a member of the committee is also a faculty member in an institution being evaluated, he will not take part in discussions regarding that institution.

### **3. The Individual Reports**

- 3.1 The final reports of the evaluation committee shall address every institution separately.
- 3.2 The final reports shall include recommendations on topics listed in the guidelines for self-evaluation, such as:
  - The goals and aims of the evaluated academic unit and study programs.
  - The study program.
  - The academic staff.
  - The students.
  - The organizational structure.
  - The broader organizational structure (school/faculty) in which the academic unit and study program operate.
  - The infrastructure (both physical and administrative) available to the study program.
  - Internal mechanisms for quality assessment.
  - Other topics to be decided upon by the evaluation committee.

### **4. The structure of the reports**

#### **4.1 Part A – *General background and an executive summary:***

- 4.1.1 General background concerning the evaluation process, the names of the members of the committee, a general description of the institution and the academic unit being assessed, and the committee's work.
- 4.1.2 An executive summary that will include a description of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic unit and program being evaluated.

#### **4.2 Part B – *In-depth description of subjects examined:***

- 4.2.1 This part will be composed according to the topics examined by the evaluation committee, and based on the self-evaluation report submitted by the institution.
- 4.2.2 For each topic examined the report will present a summary of the findings, the relevant information and analysis.

#### **4.3 Part C – *Recommendations:***

- 4.3.1 Comprehensive conclusions and recommendations regarding the evaluated academic unit and the study program according to the topics in part B.
- 4.3.2 Recommendations may be classified according to the following categories:
  - ***Congratulatory remarks and minimal changes recommended, if any.***

- ***Desirable changes recommended*** at the institution's convenience and follow-up in the next cycle of evaluations.
- ***Important/needed changes requested for ensuring appropriate academic quality*** within a reasonable time, in coordination with the institution (1-3 years)
- ***Essential and urgent changes required, on which continued authorization will be contingent*** (immediately or up to one year).
- ***A combination of any of the above.***

**4.4 Part D - Appendices:**

The appendices shall contain the committee's letter of appointment and the schedule of the on-site visit.

**5. The General report**

In addition to the individual reports concerning each study program, the committee shall submit to the CHE the following documents:

- 5.1 A general report regarding the status of the evaluated field of study within the Israeli institutions of higher education.
- 5.2 Recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

**We urge the committee to clearly list its specific recommendations for each one of the topics (both in the individual reports and in the general report) and to prioritize these recommendations, in order to ease the eventual monitoring of their implementation.**

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# APPENDIX 2



**Suggestion for site-visit schedule- 29/5/08**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Location</b> <b><u>Building C</u></b>
09:00-09:30	Opening session: The heads of the institution	President <b>Prof. Seev Neumann</b> Vice President <b>Prof. Zvi Safra</b> Head of Quality Assessment System <b>Prof. Zev Klein</b>	<b>Room 401</b>
09:30-10:15	Meeting with the School's/department's academic leadership	Head of Department <b>Dr. Tova Benski</b>	<b>Room 401</b>
10:15-11:30	Meeting with senior faculty and committees' representatives  1. Teaching Committee 2. M.A. Program Development and Tracking Committee 3. Criminology and Law enforcement Teaching Committee. 4. Appointments Committee Research Committee. 6. Academic Travel Committee. 7. Kaveret magazine.	Dr. Amichai Silberman Prof. Menahem Amir Dr. Avi Shohat Prof. Dahlia Moore Dr. Dahlia Rachman Moore Dr. Dani Gimshi Dr. David Segal Dr. Gad Ben-Ezer Dr. Itamar Shabtai Dr. Lydia Amir Dr. Mordechai Rimor Dr. Rachel Pasternak Prof. Sylvie Fogel- Bijaoui Prof. Zev Klein	<b>Room 401</b>
11:30-12:00	Meeting with alumni	Mr. Avi Shnider Ms. Dafna Halperin Ms. Keren Chalmattam Ms. Michal Fucs Mr. Oleg Komlik Ms. Rika Or	
12:00-12:30	Meeting with junior faculty	Dr. Eldad Rom Dr. Hilla Ha'elyon Dr. Khalil Rinnawi Ms. Ronit Bisson Dr. Yuval Raveh	<b>Room 401</b>
12:30-13:00	Meeting with adjuncts	Mr. Avi Shnider Dr. Gadi Taub Dr. Nurit Rinott Ms. Sharon Kerrett Ms. Sigalit Elish	<b>Room 401</b>
13:00-13:30	Closed lunch of committee members		<b>Room 262</b>

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Location</b> <b><u>Building C</u></b>
13:30-14:15	Meeting with undergraduate students	Ms. Miri Cohen Ms. Limor Hemed Ms. Michal Hanegbi Ms. Maayan Koren Ms. Maya Lubrani Folkman Ms. Meital Levin Ms. Meital Rozental Ms. Moran Rachamin Ms. Gani Sima Ms. Lior Tabak	<b>Room 401</b>
14:15-15:00	Tour at the institution	Classrooms, library, faculty facilities, computer laboratory	<b>Room 401</b>
15:00-15:30	Closed meeting of the Committee		<b>Room 401</b>
15:30-16:15	Summation meeting with heads of the institution	President <b>Prof. Seev Neumann</b> Vice president <b>Prof. Zvi Safra</b> Head of Quality Assessment System <b>Prof. Zev Klein</b> Head of Department <b>Dr. Tova Bensi</b> Academic Secretary, <b>Ms. Raya Klein</b>	<b>Room 401</b>