



Mechanical Engineering Department



20 November 2008

The response of the Department of Mechanical Engineering of OBC to the report of the:

General Report of the Committee for the Evaluation of Mechanical Engineering Studies

Mechanical Engineering Studies  
Within the Israeli System of Higher Education

**Thank you note:**

ORT Braude College and especially the Department of Mechanical Engineering thank the committee for carrying out an excellent and meaningful evaluation of our ME study program. Your visit at the college for the two-day audit of the study program was conducted in a thorough manner, focusing on important issues, while doing your assessment in a friendly and considerate manner. Your report, which is focused and thoughtful, presents the issues in a constructive fashion. While the members of the ME department may not totally agree with all of your assessments, the members of the study program respect the suggestions in the report, and are planning to implement most of the committee's recommendations.

**Introduction**

This response is the result of the input and the conclusions arrived at by the faculty members of the ME study program, regarding the evaluation report, which was submitted to the ME department by the committee for the evaluation of the study program at OBC. The faculty members and the department chair person held several meetings on the subject, with people who are involved in shaping the day-to-day activities of the department, as well as with key individuals who influence the vision and the future direction of the ME study program. The objective of the discussions was to incorporate in this response a range of opinions regarding the evaluation report.

Three formal meetings which were held in order to discuss the evaluation report, included:

1. An assembly of all lecturers, including the faculty members and the external lecturers.
2. A departmental council meeting in the presence of OBC Vice President for academic affairs, Prof. David Shoikhet.

3. A departmental council meeting in the presence of the President of OBC, Prof. Yohanan Arzi.

It is important to note that, as one would expect, a spectrum of views has been expressed by the participants in the different discussions and meetings. However, a common general understanding has emerged from these discussions, and the overall composite opinion is expressed in this response.

This response of the ME department of OBC focuses on one issue in the report of the Committee:

***... "only the research universities have the depth and the breadth of faculty as well as the infrastructure to provide the type of high "value-added" graduates at the M.Sc. and Ph.D. levels required by the Israeli industry and academia. The committee believes that the current B.Sc. programs at the colleges without advanced level degrees need to be deepened and broadened before thinking about adding additional advanced degree programs"...***

The motivation for developing a non-thesis Masters study program in the department of ME in OBC stems from three elements:

- a. The department has recorded in the past two years tens of inquiries and requests from our graduates and other professionals in the area about an academic Masters program in mechanical engineering. These potential students are interested in the program for several reasons:
  - Advancement in their professional career that is conditional on obtaining a Masters Degree.
  - Interest in personal advancement and curiosity.
  - Supplement a degree in another field of engineering with a Masters degree in ME, mostly in order to expand their personal skills at a higher level.
- b. Engineering colleges in Israel do not currently offer a Masters degree in ME, and OBC believes that it can become the pioneer among the colleges in this respect.
- c. Graduate student in the Masters study program can collaborate with faculty member in research as part of their final project for the Masters degree, and thus support research activities in the ME department.

The CHE issued (in October 2006) the requirements for establishing a Masters Degree study program in academic institutions. The ME department at OBC already meets most of these requirements:

1. Have four graduating years in the B.Sc. study program.
2. Assign a senior lecturer to head the Masters program.
3. All lecturers must have Ph.D. degrees.
4. Have a range of senior lecturers to teach the courses in the Masters study program.
5. The study program is expected to have proper facilities for the Master study program.

The ME department does not currently meet the requirement to have a faculty member with a Professor rank, in the study program. However, this limitation can be met by the time the program is approved.

The ME department will have to recruit additional faculty members and external lecturers to support a Masters study program.

For the reasons listed above, it is important for the department of ME in OBC to pursue the ability to offer a non-thesis Masters study program in mechanical engineering.

The ME department expects to offer a non-thesis Masers study program for which the need for research infrastructure is minimal. The ME department understands and agrees with the concerns that the committee expressed regarding thesis-based Masters Degree.