



Committee for the Evaluation of Physical Therapy Studies

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Physical Therapy Department

Evaluation Report

December 2007

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Chapter 1- Background

At its meeting on March 8, 2005 the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of Physical Therapy during the academic year 2005-2006.

Following the decision of the CHE, the Minister of Education, who serves ex officio as the Chairperson of the CHE, appointed a committee consisting of:

- **Prof. Stuart Binder-Macleod**- Department of Physical Therapy, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, U.S.A, Committee Chairman
- **Prof. Ruth Dickstein**- Department of Physical Therapy, Haifa University
- **Prof. Steven H. Tepper**- Division of Physical Therapy, Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia, U.S.A
- **Dr. Margaret Yekutiel**- Department of Physical Therapy, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Emeritus).

Ms. Alisa Elon- Coordinator of the committee on behalf of the Council for Higher Education.

Within the framework of its activity, the committee was requested to:

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, which were submitted by institutions that provide study programs in Physical Therapy, and hold on-site visits to those institutions.
2. Present the CHE with final reports for the evaluated academic units and study programs - a separate report for each institution, including the committee's findings and recommendations, together with the response of the institutions to the reports.
3. To submit to the CHE a report regarding its opinion of the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education. The committee will submit a separate report to the CHE in this matter.

The committee's Terms of Reference document is attached as **Appendix 1**.

The first stage of the quality assessment process consisted of self-evaluation by the institutions. This process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (of October 2005) and on the basis of the Specific Questions for the Field of Physical Therapy which were compiled by the committee.

Chapter 2-Committee Procedures

The committee held its first meeting on 20.3.06 during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning Physical Therapy study programs in Israel and its quality assessment activity.

In June-July 2006 the committee members received the self-evaluation reports.

During January 2007 the committee members conducted a two or three-day visit to each of the institutions offering study programs in the field under examination as well as to their clinical training centers.

During the visits, the committee met with the relevant officials within the organizational structure of each institution, as well as faculty and students.

In accordance with the committee's request, the institution publicized in advance details of the committee's upcoming visit and it invited academic staff members, administrative staff and students to meet with the committee in order to sound out their opinions of the Physical Therapy study programs offered at the institution.

This report deals with the Physical Therapy Department at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

The committee's visit to the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev took place on January 15 and 16, 2007. The schedule of the visit, including the list of participants representing the institution, is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The committee members thank the management of the Institution and the Physical Therapy Department for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit.

Chapter 3- Evaluation of the Physical Therapy Department at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Background

In 1970 the first meeting of the Board of Governors of the University of the Negev took place. The University was formally acknowledged by the CHE in 1973. Following David Ben-Gurion's death, the University was renamed to "Ben-Gurion University of the Negev" (BGU).

The total number of students at the university is about 17,000.

The Department of Physical Therapy (PT) operates within the framework of the Leon and Matilda Recanati School for Community Health Professions.

In 1983-4 the Physical Therapy Track is authorized by the CHE to award Bachelor of Physical Therapy (B.P.T.) degree.

The total number of students in the department is 140.

Following a careful review of the unit's self-study document and a productive two-day site visit (15.1.06 – 16.1.06), the committee was favorably impressed with the quality of the academic program. Many strengths related to the academic preparation of the physical therapy students were noted. There are also several weaknesses, which if addressed, will markedly enhance the quality of the program.

The **strengths** include:

- 1) Ongoing evaluation and reflection was apparent mainly through the operation of the Year Committees that allow students and staff to provide timely input to allow changes to be made in individual courses as needed. The teaching committee with representatives from other departments also contributes to self evaluation and updating of the program.

- 2) The faculty members within the Department are all committed to the training of outstanding PT students. There is a nice mix of experience levels and areas of content expertise within the department's faculty members. All faculty members are accessible to the students and are generally viewed as content experts by the students. In addition, the students appreciate their close professional relationships with the faculty. The students feel well prepared by the academic faculty for their clinical rotations and ultimate entry into the workforce.
- 3) The committee was impressed with the quality of the students that we met. The students came prepared to discuss issues of concern. The students' feedback to the committee was very constructive and professional. Although the students raised issues they would like to see addressed, they were very enthusiastic about the program and the PT profession.
- 4) The University and Department have an effective affirmative action plan that recruits and provides adequate support for underrepresented populations in the Negev, notably the Bedouins.
- 5) The student classroom and laboratory facilities were excellent.
- 6) The curriculum is comprehensive and adequately addresses each of the major areas of contemporary clinical practice.
- 7) The current leadership of the University, Faculty, School, and Department are all committed to strengthening the research capabilities and productivity of the Department.
- 8) The environment at BGU offers many advantages to the Department of Physical Therapy. The program has access to an outstanding medical faculty that teach many important components of the program. The University also offers a potentially rich environment for faculty members within the Department to collaborate with members of other Departments and Faculties.

Weaknesses and Recommendations

- 1) The scientific productivity of the staff is insufficient. There are presently no faculty members within the Department on the academic track. Also there is only one member within the Department that currently has a PhD and an independent research program. This situation must be remedied.

Recommendations: The recruitment and retention of research capable faculty members to the Department is essential for the enhancement of the research mission of the unit. The Department must follow through on its present plans to hire two doctorally trained individuals who are presently completing their studies in the US and plan to return to BGU. These individuals must be placed on the academic track and given the appropriate seed money and research space. In addition, the University must free up academic track positions for the current junior faculty members when they complete their PhDs. The parallel track should be used only for MA level employees who teach mainly professional –practical courses. All PhD trained faculty should work on the academic track. The head of the department should be moved to the academic track immediately

- 2) As noted within the self-study report, “the concentration of all clinical rotations in one year because of logistic reasons is educationally wrong and frustrating.”

We agree. One of the founding principals of the PT Department was the early exposure of student to patients. This has been lost due to the shortage of sufficient clinical sites. This is a problem that challenges physical therapy education throughout the country and has dramatically altered the pattern of clinical education of the students at BGU. The commencement of clinical education is now delayed until the middle of the third year of training. All parties that we met with agreed that this is too late in the students’ training. The students were also very concerned that this shortage requires them to relocate during their training to areas outside of the Negev. Finally, the department requires the students to go for one full year without taking any classes and then to return to campus for one final semester of classes. This sequence of studies is less than optimal. The courses that are taught in the fourth year cannot be integrated by the students during their studies into clinical practice.

Recommendations: This situation must be changed. The faculty must explore various options to remedy this problem. Clinical education must be distributed more evenly throughout the curriculum. The committee suggests that the two 4-week hospital affiliations (Hospital Department and Orthopedic Surgery) can be combined into one 8-week affiliation. Also, rather than requiring all students to take a pediatric affiliation, we suggest allowing students to select an elective of their choice. This would open up many more options. Also, because of the shortage of current clinical affiliation sites experienced by all of the current PT programs, it is crucial that no additional programs be opened within the country.

- 3) Although the program is very comprehensive, it needs reorganization. The curriculum has too many credits and requires too many contact hours by the students to allow optimal training. The BPT program requires nearly 60 to 100 credits above the number required for other three or four year bachelor degrees. There are also concerns regarding the current sequencing of courses within the curriculum. As an example, Exercise Physiology follows the Cardiovascular Rehabilitation and Respiratory Treatment course within the curriculum. We believe that the clinical intervention course must build on the foundation science courses.

Recommendation: The faculty need to revise the curriculum by either reducing the number of credit hours taken so that the program is more in line with other BSc programs or restructuring the program so that students are awarded a BSc after three years (approximately 120 credits) and then continue on to a two-year Masters in Physical Therapy program. Any restructuring of the program should be conducted in coordination with all concerned parties, including those in charge of budgeting and accreditation, such as the PBC and the CHE.

For either option, the faculty must revise the curriculum by reducing the number of small courses taken by the students (e.g., Cerebral Palsy, PNF) and re-sequencing the current course offerings.

- 4) Combining the PT students with the Nursing and EMS students for many of the basic science and medical courses has required the faculty to lower the level of instruction in these classes. Several instructors noted that the education of the PT students would be enhanced if the classes could be separated.

Recommendation: The University should make every effort to teach all basic sciences to PT students separately from the nursing and EMS students. This would allow the faculty to enhance the level of instruction to all three groups of students.

- 5) The Department does not take advantage of many of the clinical education opportunities that could be available to train students.

Recommendation: The faculty should consider utilizing the clinical resources in Soroka Medical center to enhance the students' classroom instruction, especially during the first two years of study.

- 6) The Exceptions Committee often overrides the faculty judgments in student matters.

Recommendation: Although the students' rights to appeal are recognized, the ongoing overriding of faculty recommendations to expel students is a serious concern. Representatives of the department should participate in the Exceptions committee with their views seriously considered.

The Self-Study Process:

The self evaluation report submitted by the Physical Therapy Department to the Council for Higher Education was prepared with the help of all ranks of faculty and staff members. Reading the report, the committee got the impression that a sincere and honest attempt was made to describe all aspects of the department's activity and to identify its strengths and weaknesses. However, the report was inconveniently organized, with some data missing or difficult to trace. Especially, the review committee would like to note that several major inconsistencies and errors within the self-study document related to the number of faculty members at each rank and to student attrition.

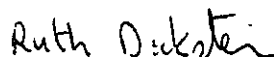
Summary

Overall, the administration and faculty must be commended for offering an outstanding BSc program in Physical Therapy. The students are trained to function at a high level and are qualified to practice in all setting presently served by physical therapists. The recruitment of additional research capable faculty members must be a high priority for the Department. Also, a more effective timing of placement of students in their full-time clinical placements must be implemented as soon as possible.

Signed By:



Prof. Stuart Binder-Macleod
Chairman



Prof. Ruth Dickstein



Prof. Steven H. Tepper



Dr. Margaret Yekutieli

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference of the Committee



מדינת ישראל

STATE OF ISRAEL

Minister of Education Culture and Sports

November 7, 2005

To:

Prof. Stuart Binder-Macleod - Department of Physical Therapy, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, U.S.A
Prof. Ruth Dickstein - Department of Physical Therapy, Haifa University
Prof. Steven H. Tepper - Division of Physical Therapy, Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia, U.S.A
Dr. Margaret Yekutiel - Department of Physical Therapy, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-sheva (Emeriti)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hereby appoint you as members of the Council for Higher Education's (CHE) Committee for the Evaluation of Physical Therapy study-programs (that have already received authorization) within institutions of higher education in Israel.

You are kindly requested to operate in accordance with the Appendix to the Terms of Reference of Evaluation Committees (study-programs), which is attached to this Terms of Reference document.

The Committee is requested within the framework of its activity to:

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports which shall be submitted by the institutions that provide study-programs in Physical Therapy, and hold on-site visits to those institutions.
2. Present the CHE- by January 2007- with final reports regarding the evaluated academic units and study-programs- a separate report for each institution including the Committee's findings and recommendations, together with the institutions' responses to the reports.

Within the framework of the final reports, the Committee is requested to refer to the following topics, among others, in relation to each of the study-programs:

1. The goals and aims of the evaluated academic unit and study-programs.
2. The study-program and its standard.
3. The academic staff.
4. The students.
5. The organizational structure — both academic and administrative - of the academic unit and study-program.

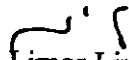
6. The broad organizational structure (school/faculty) in which the academic unit and the study-program operate.
7. Physical and administrative infrastructure available to the study-program.
8. Internal mechanisms for quality assessment
9. Conclusions of the academic unit and the study-program.
10. Other topics to be decided upon by the Evaluation Committee.

In addition to its final report concerning each study program under examination, the committee shall submit to the CHE the following documents:

1. A report regarding its opinion as to the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education.
2. A proposal of standards for studies in Physiotherapy.

Professor Stuart Binder-Macleod shall preside over the Committee as Chairman.
Ms. Alisa Elon shall coordinate the Committee's activities.

Yours sincerely,



Limor Livnat

Minister of Education, Culture and Sport
Chairperson of The Council for Higher Education

cc: Mr. Naftali Weitman, Secretary of The Council for Higher Education
Ms. Alisa Elon, Committee Coordinator

Enclosure

**Appendix to the Terms of Reference of Evaluation Committees (study-
programs).**

Appendix to the Terms of Reference of 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 once in six years and institutions once in eight years. The quality assessment system came into effect in the academic year of 2004-2005.

The 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 this subject and to develop internal mechanisms for the evaluation of academic quality 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 activity. The evaluation committee is requested not to make comparisons between the institutions.

2. The Evaluation Committee

- 2.1 The CHE shall appoint a Committee to carry out quality assessment of the study-programs.
- 2.2 A senior academic figure in the examined field shall be appointed as Chairman.
- 2.3 The Committee shall include 3 to 5 senior academic figures in the field from leading institutions in Israel and abroad. In exceptional cases, and in cooperation with the committee chairman, an authoritative figure who is not on the academic staff of an institution of higher education may be appointed as a committee member.
- 2.4 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 work of the Evaluation Committee

- 3.1 The Committee shall hold meetings, as needed, before visiting the institution, in order to evaluate the material received.
- 3.2 The committee shall visit the institution and the academic unit being evaluated 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-study 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.

- 3.3 In a meeting at the beginning of the visit, the committee will meet with the heads of the institution (president/rector, dean), the head 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.
- 3.4 The duration of the visits will be coordinated with the Chairman of the Committee according to the issue, and in any event will not be less than one day.
- 3.5 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. The institution's and the academic unit's response will not result in changes to the content of the Committee's report, unless they point out errors in the data or typographical errors in the Committee's report. In such cases, the committee will be able to make the required corrections in its final report.

4. The Evaluation Committee's Report

- 4.1 The final report of the evaluation committee shall address every institution separately.
- 4.2 The final report shall include recommendations on the subjects listed in the guidelines for self-evaluation, and in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- 4.3 The recommendations can be classed as one of the five following alternatives:
 - 4.3.1 *Congratulatory remarks and minimal changes recommended, if any.*
 - 4.3.2 *Desirable changes recommended* at the institution's convenience and follow-up in the next cycle of evaluation.
 - 4.3.3 *Important/needed changes requested for ensuring appropriate academic quality* within a reasonable time, in coordination with the institution (1-3 years).
 - 4.3.4 *Essential and urgent changes required, on which continued authorization will be contingent* (immediately or up to one year).
 - 4.3.5 *A combination of any of the above.*
- 4.4 The committee's report shall include the following:
 - 4.4.1 **Part A — General background and an executive summary:**
 - 4.4.1.1 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.
 - 4.4.1.2 An executive summary which will include a description of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic unit and program being evaluated, according to the subjects listed in the body of the report and a list of recommendations for action.
 - 4.4.2 **Part B — In depth description of subjects examined:**
 - 4.4.2.1 This part will be composed according to the topics examined by the evaluation committee, in accordance with the committee's Terms of Reference and the report submitted by the institution, and at the discretion of the committee.
 - 4.4.2.2 For each topic examined - the report will present a summary of the findings, the relevant information and an analysis thereof, and conclusions and recommended actions.
 - 4.4.3 **Part C — Summary and recommendations:**

- 4.4.3.1 A short summary of every one of the topics described in detail in Part B, including the committee's recommendations.
- 4.4.3.2 Comprehensive conclusion/s and recommendation/s regarding the evaluated academic unit and the study-programs.
- 4.4.4 **Part D- Appendices:**
 - The appendices shall contain the committee's Terms of Reference, relevant information about the institution and the evaluated academic unit, the schedule of the on-site visit.
- 4.5 The final report will be delivered to the institution, with the deadline for its and the academic unit's response noted.
- 4.6 The Committee's final report together with the response of the institution and the academic unit will be brought before the CHE.
- 4.7 The CHE will discuss these documents and formulate its decisions within (approximately) a year from the time the guidelines for self-evaluation were sent to the institutions.

APPENDIX 2

The schedule of the visit



16.1.2007 - 15.1.2007 - לוח זמנים לביקור הועדה להערכת איכות במחלקה לפיזיותרפיה - BGU Physical Therapy - January 15-16, 2006

Faculty of Health Sciences, Goldman Building (building #16), Room 113

First Day – January 15

Meeting with	Participants	שעות	משתתפים	פגישה עם
Opening session with the heads of the institution and the senior staff appointed to deal with the quality assessment: Rector, Deputy Rector and the Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences	Prof. Jimmy Weinblatt Prof. Yael Edan Prof. Shaul Sofer	09:00-09:40	פרופ' ג'ימי וינבלט פרופ' יעל אדן פרופ' שאול סופר	פגישה עם ישיבה פתוחה של הועדה עם הנהלת האוניברסיטה: רקטור, ממונה על הערכת האיכות במוסד, דיין הפקולטה למדעי הבריאות
Meeting with the academic and the administrative heads of the department: Head of Recanati School for Community Health Professions, Head of Physical Therapy Department and Head of the Administration	Prof. Avishay Goldberg Dr. Itshak Melzer Ms. Dafna Madar	09:40-11:00	פרופ' אבישי גולדברג ד"ר יצחק מלצר גב' דפנה מדר	פגישה עם ההנהלה אקדמית ומנהלית של המחלקה: מנהל בי"ס ריקנאטי, ראש המחלקה לפיזיותרפיה ורכזת אדמיניסטרטיבית של המחלקה
Meeting with the representatives of the committees: • Teaching Committee • Exception Committee	Prof. Jacob Gopas Dr. Yael Segev	11:00-12:00	פרופ' יעקב גופס ד"ר יעל שגב	פגישה עם נציגי הוועדות: • ועדת הוראה • ועדת חריגים
Meeting with the representative of the Admissions Committee	Ms. Ofra Even-Haim	12:00-12:30	גבי עפרה אבן-חיים	פגישה עם נציגי ועדת קבלה
Meeting with the representative of the Appointments Committee	Prof. Avishay Goldberg	12:30-13:00	פרופ' אבישי גולדברג	פגישה עם נציגי ועדת מינויים
Lunch – closed meeting of the committee		13:00-13:45		ארוחת צהריים – ישיבה סגורה של הועדה
Meeting with senior academic staff	Mr. Elisha Vered Ms. Ofra Even-Haim Ms Nava Wagman Ms. Irit Tsedek Ms. Judith Melzer	13:45-14:30	מר אלישע ורד גבי עפרה אבן חיים גבי נאוה וגמן גבי עירית צדק גבי יהודית מלצר	פגישה עם הסגל בכיר של המחלקה לפיזיותרפיה המעורב התהליך

Meeting with junior academic staff	<p>Mr. Ilan Kurtz Ms. Patris Schlisel Ms. Nurit Haiman, Ms. Galit Greenberg Ms. Rona Katz Ms. Anat Mirelman Dr. Nissim Benjuya</p>	14:30-15:15	<p>מר אילן קורץ גבי פטריס שליסי גבי נורית חיימן גבי גלית גרינברג גבי רונה כץ גבי ענת מירלמן ד"ר ניסים בנגויה</p>	פגישה עם הסגל הזוטור של המחלקה לפיזיותרפיה
Meeting with faculty members who lecturer to Physical Therapy students, but are not member of the PT Department (e.g., physicians, statisticians etc.)	<p>Prof. Gopas Jacob Dr. Yaet Segev Prof. Virgin Dr. Ilamar Gruto Dr. Iris Har-Vardi Dr. Fridman-Alon</p>	15:15-16:00	<p>פרופ' יעקב גופס ד"ר יעל שב פרופ וירגין ד"ר איתמר גרוטו ד"ר איריס הר-ורדי ד"ר פרידמן אלון</p>	פגישה עם מרצים מסוג הפקולטה למדעי הבריאות שאינם חברי סגל במחלקה לפיזיותרפיה
Meeting with Students in the 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th years of the BPT	<p>Students representatives: Alon Bloch Avishai Bartal Igor Ichorest Yoav Gimon Gil Lizrovich Shirley Imergot</p>	16:00-17:00	<p>נציגי ועדי הכיתה: שנה א - אלון בלוך אבישי ברטל שנה ב - איגור איוורסט שנה ג - יואב גימון גיל ליזרוביץ שנה ד - שירלי אמרגוט</p>	פגישה עם נציגי סטודנטים במחלקה לפיזיותרפיה

BGU Physical Therapy - January 15-16, 2006
 Faculty of Health Sciences, Goldman Building (building #16), Room 113

Second Day - January 16

Meeting with	Participants	שעות	משתתפים	מגישה עם
Meeting with clinical instructors	4 to 8 clinical instructors who work near the University	09:00-10:00	מרטין ניב, הודסה עין כרם-נציג מלוינישטיין לובה זליך, סורוקה עדן, אורי אלבר מסורוקה נורית היימן, טליה, התפתחות הילד-סורוקה מיכל שוורץ-מכבי שרותי בריאות	מפגש עם ארבעה עד שמונה מדיריכם קליניים
A general tour in the campus - Visiting library, Classes, Students laboratories and Research laboratories	Ms. Ronit Temes Dr. Itshak Melzer	10:00-11:00	גב' רונית טמס ד"ר יצחק מלצר	סיור בקמפוס - ספרייה, כיתות, מעבדות סטודנטים, ומעבדות מחקר
Lunch and closed door working meeting for site visit team	Site visit team	12:00-14:00		ארוחת צהריים ושיבת סיכום סגורה של הוועדה
Summation meeting with senior staff appointed to deal with the quality assessment, heads of the academic unit: Rector, Deputy Rector, Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences, Head of Recanati School for Community Health Professions, Head of Physical Therapy Department	Prof. Jimmy Weinblatt Prof. Yael Edan Prof. Sofer Shaul Prof Avishay Goldberg Dr. Itshak Melzer	14:00-14:30	פרופ' גימי ווינבלט פרופ' יעל אדן פרופ' שאול סופר פרופ' אבישי גולדברג ד"ר יצחק מלצר	סיכום עם ראשי האוניברסיטה: רקטור, ממונה על הערכת האיכות במוסד, ד"ר הפקולטה וראשי היחידה האקדמית

