



Committee for the Evaluation of Social Work and Human Services
Study-programs

**Department of Social Work
Tel Hai Academic College
Evaluation Report**

September 2007

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Chapter 1- Background

At its meeting on March 8th, 2005 the Council for Higher Education (hereinafter: the CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the fields of Social Work and Human Services during the academic year 2005-2006.

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

- Professor Jonathan Rabinowitz - School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University, Committee Chairman
- Ms. Ilana Ben-Shahar - Director of the Social Work Department, Ministry of Health
- Professor Ronald A. Feldman - School of Social Work, Columbia University, USA
- Professor Eileen Gambrill - School of Social Welfare, the University of California at Berkeley, USA
- Professor Zahava Solomon - School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University

Within the framework of its activity, the committee was requested to¹:

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, which were submitted by institutions that provide study programs in Social Work and Human Services, and to hold on-site visits at 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 as to the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education and a proposal of standards for Social Work & Human Services studies. The committee will submit a separate report to the CHE in this matter.

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 Fields of Social Work and Human Services which were compiled by the committee.

¹The Document with Terms of Reference of the committee is attached as **Appendix 1**

Chapter 2 -Committee Procedures

The Committee held its first meeting on May 11, 2006, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning Social Work and Human Services study programs in Israel and the quality assessment activity.

During the months of July and August 2006 the committee members received the self-evaluation reports and in September 2006 they began to hold discussions regarding these reports.

In November 2006 the committee members conducted a full-day visit to Social Work and Human Services Departments in five universities and three colleges. During the visits, the committee met with the academic leadership of the institution and that of the academic units under evaluation, representatives of committees, academic staff members, teaching assistants and students.

This report deals with the Department of Social Work, Tel Hai Academic College

The committee's visit to the Department of Social Work took place on November 9, 2006. The schedule of the visit, including the list of participants representing the institution, is attached as Appendix 2.

The committee members would like to express their appreciation for the extensive amount of labor, thought and resources that went into preparations of the report and on-site visit and thank the management of the College and the Department of Social Work for their hospitality towards the committee.

Chapter 3 - Tel Hai Academic College, Department of Social Work

I. Mission and Goals

Tel Hai Academic College has been operating as an independent academic college since 1996. The college has offered studies in social work for about twenty years, first as a branch of Haifa University School of Social Work, and since 1995, as a self-contained academic department. The Department of Social Work was the first department in the college to receive authorization from the Council for Higher Education to grant a bachelors degree.

The college is located in the Upper Galilee, approximately two kilometers north of Kiryat Shmona - a geographical region that is characterized by small communities, many different cultures and a history of security-related tension, which are reflected in the activities of the department.

The Department of Social Work is part of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities. It views its mission as contributing to the development of the upper Galilee region and its human capital by providing access to higher education, personal development, and work opportunities.

The heads of the institution have pointed out that the department has been the locomotive of the college's development in terms of student body, recruitment of faculty and administrative staff. The Department has a prominent role in defining the college's mission in serving the local community.

II. Study Program

The Department offers a BA program in social work. The Department is planning to offer an MA degree program in social work and has submitted a proposal to the Council for Higher Education.

The BA curriculum consists of traditional introductory courses (e.g. psychology, sociology, social work, statistics, and research methods) and courses that are designed to address the myriad needs of the communities served by the Department. However, the review of the study program indicates that whereas several areas such as elderly or family receive considerable attention, other important areas and populations such as mental retardation, mental health, social work in health settings, corrections, ethics, etc are either not taught at all or are underrepresented (i.e. a single elective course is offered). The study program should be better balanced.

With regard to the composition of the study program, when staff were asked what criteria are used to select practice theories and intervention methods taught, the evidentiary status of the intervention program or practice theories was not mentioned. Criteria mentioned included the particular research interests of faculty members who do not seem to have a clear understanding of what evidence-based practice is as described in original sources. They describe evidence-based practice as "Interventions that have been proven to be

effective." That is they describe evidence-based practices (e.g., practice guidelines), not the philosophy and practice of evidence-based practice.

Most faculty members were not familiar with the Cochrane and Campbell databases which are key to helping practitioners quickly locate answers to particular practice and policy questions.

In the meeting with students they were critical of overlap between some courses, such as "Social Aspects of Aging" and "Social Work in the field of Health and Elderly" or "Dynamics of Family Life" and "Research on Family-related issues". As noted above, a more diverse study program should be devised. In addition, the review of several syllabi indicated that the references are outdated.

III. Staff and Teaching

In 2005-2006 the Department employed 15 faculty members, 12 of them full-time, two at 83% time and the rest half time or less. One hundred and four annual hours were taught by 15 adjuncts teachers. In 2005-2006 there were 270 students. Ratio of students per faculty member was 20/1.

A substantial number of the faculty wish to strengthen their research capabilities in order to enhance their career prospects and improve the Department's educational offerings. Others wish to concentrate primarily on teaching and feel disadvantaged when competing for promotion because they do not have strong research credentials. If the Department shifts significantly toward research it will need to devise constructive ways to accommodate those faculty members who regard themselves primarily as teachers. Alternatively, it could de-emphasize the need for research-oriented faculty and instead focus primarily upon hiring excellent teachers and educators. There is no sabbatical leave program even though it would be much needed if the Department seeks to promote major research advances on the part of faculty.

The number of students in introductory courses is too large. The increase in number of students due to budget constraints may have a negative impact on instruction.

Students did not have an awareness of what type of research would be most germane to a particular decision that must be made; students could not identify what kind of published research this would be calling into question the claim that the department produces educated research consumers

IV. Students

About 20% of the 270 social work students are from the North and the rest are from other areas of the country. The department also strives to assist new immigrants, students from minority groups and students from underprivileged populations. Students from these groups are afforded leniency in meeting admission requirements. The Admissions Committee also takes cultural differences and language difficulties into account.

The college devotes a lot of attention to students with learning disabilities and established a support center for that purpose. A notable portion of the students studying in the department have learning disabilities. The Support Center for Students with Learning Disabilities plays a significant role in training

these students, and the department's collaboration with it is efficient and beneficial. Many faculty members are involved in the work of the center.

Approximately 20% of the Department's graduates go on for graduate training. A majority of the graduates have found suitable work in their field of training.

The faculty see a need to improve the linkages between the School and alumni. Importantly, the Department plans to follow up its graduates and to organize an alumni reunion every ten years.

Students feel that they are treated well by faculty and administrators. There are strong positive relationships between students and faculty field supervisors

V. Research

The research budget of the Department is modest. It totals approximately NIS 250,000. The college is quite distant from existing research centers in the center of the country. This constraint, along with a heavy teaching load of the lecturers (12 hours per week), characteristic for the colleges, makes it difficult for faculty members to construct an extensive research agenda. It would be helpful to involve students in faculty research and to focus on practice oriented research.

As noted earlier, the faculty members differ significantly in their research expertise and their research productivity. In general, the research productivity is rather modest.

VI. Fieldwork

In their first year of studies students become acquainted with social work agencies and with social work practitioners. The first-year training program is prepared in cooperation with the Fieldwork Unit and the lecturers of the introductory courses.

Students begin their field work in the second year of studies. Most of the second-year students are assigned to one of 23 social services agencies. Due to a shortage of agencies in the vicinity, a number of students are assigned to elementary schools, a hostel for mentally retarded persons, the Enosh mental health organization, and a senior citizens' center

The third-year students are assigned to a variety of agencies including probation services, prisons, health and mental health services, services for the elderly, children's boarding schools, special schools, high schools, programs for at-risk adolescents, and drug rehabilitation programs. In the third year students also gain experience on the community intervention level. The students are assigned to 33 various agencies where they work with population groups such as at-risk adolescents, the elderly, people with mental disabilities, young families, women and single mothers.

The field work program entails a required course on supervision for new field work instructors, individual supervision sessions for students in the first semester, and group supervision of students in the second semester.

The unit appears to be understaffed: there is one fieldwork coordinator who works on 75% tenure slot basis while she is responsible for all the students' placement in welfare agencies.

Traditional methods are used to evaluate students' activities in the field. There is little direct observation of students with clients. It is not clear that research based formats are used to train students like repeated corrective feedback based on observation. In field work attention is not given to client focused outcomes

VII. Infrastructure

The Department does not have its own building. Most classes are held in the Rodman Science building or the library building. The Departments secretary works in a shared room with secretaries from other departments. Faculty members do not have offices. Work stations and computers are limited. The shortage of space hinders research and confidential student advising. Faculty urgently need offices that are properly equipped to accommodate their academic and research work.

A videoconference capability enables distance learning that can supplement or complement the offerings available at Tel Hai. There is an underutilization of the videoconference facility and e-learning technology which could be particularly beneficial since many of the student's live considerable distances from the campus.

The social work library is not located in the Department's building. Nevertheless, its staff are highly professional and the extant library holdings are available to social work students.

A new campus is to be built within two years. Hence, many of the infrastructure deficiencies that now confront the Department may be addressed in the near future.

VIII. Self-Study Process

The faculty have conducted the self-study process with a seriousness of purpose. Based in part upon their self-study the faculty have articulated a large number of improvements that are envisioned for the Department and the educational program. However, there are no formal or empirical criteria that have been developed for evaluating the quality of the program or the extent to which its aims are achieved. Importantly, the Department does not have a mechanism for examining the reliability and validity of its methods for assessing student performance. The educational program can be advanced significantly through articulation of the requisite evaluation criteria and processes.

Chapter 4 - Recommendations (*Priority recommendations)

General recommendations

- Standards should be set for assessing the quality of the program and goal attainment.
- The department could benefit from a closer look at the match between the needs of clients in the field and the content taught in classes to make sure there is a good match.
- Continue and expand direct client involvement in community projects including inviting clients to fairs in which community projects are presented. This is innovative and should be continued.

Study Program

- *Formal criteria should be established for designing curriculum priorities, selecting which intervention methods are to be taught, and evaluating all aspects of the educational program including especially the quality of student performance in classroom and field.
- *Review curriculum with an eye towards eliminating overlap in course content.
- Review and update syllabi of the courses.
- Improve intellectual level of required practice courses
- Infuse curriculum with content that enables students to select most effective interventions for given groups of clients.
- Significantly expand curriculum content in the areas of health and mental health, aging, poverty and welfare state and its implications.
- More attention should be given in the curriculum to the social worker as a change agent.

Teaching and Learning

- *Faculty and students should become familiar with process and philosophy of evidence based practice and with related tools such as the Cochrane and Campbell Databases and have access to them.
- *Attention should be given to helping students develop fluid critical appraisal skills for reviewing different kinds of research related to particular practice and policy questions.

Students

- *The college's mandate is to serve students in the North; yet only 20% of the students are from the North. Reasons for this discrepancy and ways to remedy it should be found.

Research

- Consider establishing a regional practice research center as a combined effort of faculty, students and field work agencies.

Fieldwork

- Consider the possibility of adding to the field work steering committee representatives of the field to help plan students' first field work exposure. This is needed in view of the special needs and changing situations of the client population.
- Students should have regular individual meetings with field work supervisors.
- Field work placements should be concentrated in agencies servicing the North.

Infrastructure

- *The physical infrastructure for the program should be vastly improved. If possible, the Department should have its own building.

Signed by:

Jonathan Rabinowitz
Prof. Jonathan Rabinowitz
Chairperson

J. Ben-Shahar
Ms. Ilana Ben Shahar

Ronald A. Feldman
Prof. Ronald A. Feldman

Eileen Gambriel
Prof. Eileen Gambriel

Zahava Solomon
Prof. Zahava Solomon

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference of the Committee



מדינת ישראל

STATE OF ISRAEL

Minister of Education Culture and Sports

December 4, 2005

To:

Professor Jonathan Rabinowitz	School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University
Ms. Ilana Ben-Shahar	Director of the Social Work Department, Ministry of Health
Professor Ronald A. Feldman	School of Social Work, Columbia University, USA
Professor Eileen Gambrell	School of Social Welfare, Berkeley University of California, USA
Professor Zahava Solomon	School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hereby appoint you as members of the Council for Higher Education's (CHE) Committee for the Evaluation of Social Work & Human Services 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 that shall be submitted by the institutions that provide study-programs in Social Work & Human Services, 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.

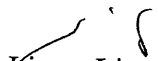
8. Internal mechanisms for quality assessment
9. Conclusions of the academic unit and the study-program.
10. Other topics to be decided upon by the Evaluation Committee.

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 field of Social Work & Human Services within the Israeli system of higher education.
2. A proposal of standards for Social Work & Human Services studies.

Professor Jonathan Rabinowitz shall preside over the Committee as Chairman.
Ms. Hadas Keppel 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. Hadas Keppel, 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

סדר היום המתוכנן לביקור ועדת ניל"ג 09.11.2006

Meeting with	Participants	מיקום	משתתפים	פגישה עם	שעות
Academic and Administrative Management of the College: President, Vice-President for academic affairs, Managing Director	Prof. Zeki Berk Prof. Shmuel Shamai Eitan Gedalizon	לשכת הנשיא	פרופ' זקי ברק פרופ' שמואל שמאי מר איתן גדליון	הנהלת המכללה: נשיא, משנה לנשיא לעניינים אקדמיים, מנכ"ל	09:30 – 09:00
Academic and Administrative Management. Committee Representatives, Junior and Senior faculty of the Social Work Department	Dr. Shira Hantman, Osnat Bin-noon, Prof. Arnon Bar-on Prof. Eli Lawenthal Prof. Shmuel Shamai Dr. Ayala Cohen Dr. Atalia Mosek Dr. Moshe Farhi Dr. Hadas Doron Dr. Tal Arazi Mrs. Sharon Egozi Mrs. Miriam Ben-Oz Mrs. Tami Zaroches Mrs. Michal Farukhi	3 קרוואן	ד"ר שירה הנטמן אסנת בן נון פרופ' ארנון בראון פרופ' אלי לונטל פרופ' שמואל שמאי ד"ר איילת כהן ד"ר עתליה מוסק ד"ר משה פרחי ד"ר הדס דורון ד"ר טל ארזי גב' שרון אגוזי גב' מרים בן עוז גב' תמי זרצ'ס גב' מיכל פרוחקי	הנהלה אקדמית ומנהלית נציגי הוועדות סגל בכיר ונוטר של החוג לעבודה סוציאלית	11:30 – 09:30

Meeting with the representatives of the department responsible for the budget	Moti Cohen Dr. Shira Hantman Tami Zaroches		מוטי כהן ד"ר שירה הנטמן תמי זרועים	פגישה עם אנשי תקציבים (ממונים על התקציב)	12:00 – 11:30
Representatives of the fieldwork Unit	Ms. Tami Zaroches Mrs. Michal Farukhi Mrs. Ronit Dror	קרוואן 3	גב' תמי זרועים גב' מיכל פרוחי גב' רונית דרור	פגישה עם נציגי מזור להכשרה מקצועית	12:30 – 12:00
Lunch – closed meeting of the committee	Members of the committee	כפר גלעדי	חברי הוועדה	ארוחת צהריים	13:30 – 12:30
Tour of the Department (Offices, classes, Library, Computer center)	Dr. Shira Hantman Dr. Ayala Cohen	סיור בקמפוס: משדרים, כיתות, ספרייה, מרכז מתשוב	ד"ר שירה הנטמן ד"ר איילה כהן	סיור בחוג לעבודה סוציאלית	14:00 – 13:30
Students' representatives	Hen Alaluf, Yehuda Levy, Angham Halaileh, Hagit Ashur , Gitit Alon		חן אללוף, יהודה לוי, יאנגאם חלאילה, חגית אשור, גיטית אלון.	נציגי סטודנטים של החוג לעבודה סוציאלית (נציגי הכיתות, לפחות 10 נציגים)	14:45 – 14:00
Summary meeting with the heads of the institution	Prof. Zeki Berk Prof. Shmuel Shamai Prof. Haim Goren Dr. Shira Hantman	לשכת הנשיא	פרופ' זקי ברק פרופ' שמואל שמאי פרופ' חיים גורן ד"ר שירה הנטמן	שיבת סיכום עם הנולת המכללה והחוג	15:00 – 14:45

הערה: ד"ר שירה הנטמן, ראש החוג לעבודה סוציאלית