



**Committee for the Evaluation of Communication Disorders Study  
Programs**

**Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem  
Department of Communication Disorders  
Evaluation Report**

**December 2011**

## Contents

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	Background.....	3
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	Committee Procedures.....	4
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	Evaluation of Communication Disorders Study Program at Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem.....	5
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	General Recommendations and Timetable.....	17

**Appendices:** Appendix 1 – Letter of Appointment

Appendix 2 - Schedule of the visit

## **Chapter 1- Background**

At its meeting on July 14, 2009, the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of Communication Disorders during the academic year 2010 – 2011.

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

- Prof. Jaclyn Spitzer, Department of Otolaryngology, Head / Neck Surgery, Columbia University, USA – Committee Chair
- Prof. Deena Bernstein, Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences, Lehman College, the City University of New York, USA
- Prof. Miriam Faust, Department of Psychology & The Gonda Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, Bar-Ilan University, Israel
- Prof. Brooke Hollowell, Communication Sciences and Disorders, College of Health Sciences and Professions, Ohio University, USA
- Prof. Rosemary Lubinski, Department of Communicative Disorders & Sciences, University of Buffalo, USA

***Ms. Yael Franks*** - Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:<sup>1</sup>

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Communication Disorders, and to conduct on-site visits at those institutions.
2. Submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the evaluated academic units and study programs, including the Committee's findings and recommendations.
3. Submit to the CHE a general report regarding the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

The entire process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (of October 2009).

---

<sup>1</sup> The Committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

## **Chapter 2-Committee Procedures**

The Committee held its first meetings on May 11, 2011, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as Communication Disorders Study programs in Israel.

In May 2011, the Committee held its visits of evaluation, and visited the Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem, Haifa University and the Tel Aviv University. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

This report deals with the Department of Communication Disorders at the Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem. The Committee's visit to Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem took place on May 12, 15, 2011.

The schedule of the visit is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The Committee thanks the management of Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem and the Department of Communication Disorders for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

### **Chapter 3: Evaluation of Communication Disorders Study Program at the Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem**

*This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the visit to the institution, and does not take account of any subsequent changes. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Evaluation Committee based on the documentation provided by the institution, information gained through interviews, discussion and observation as well as other information available to the Committee.*

#### **1. Preface**

The Communication Disorders program at Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem has had full accreditation from the Council for Higher Education (CHE) since 2004. In addition to the BA program offered at the college, the college offers an equal track for Ultra Orthodox Women, situated off the main campus at the Ultra Orthodox College of Jerusalem, located at the Jerusalem Technological Center Campus.

#### **2. Mission and Goals**

The department's goals, as stated in the self-evaluation report (SER) are to:

- a) Prepare students in the field of speech-language pathology and audiology (education for practice);
- b) Provide high quality service to the community;
- c) Educate speech-language pathologists from various backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of Israeli society;
- d) Promote research.

#### **Education:**

Evidence that the program offered to substantiate its first mission statement is that its graduates are "sought after by relevant places of employment and are valued as good professionals." While the committee did not see the results of employment surveys, evidence of the highly-motivated student body, a dedicated staff, the shortage of professionals in the community, and the separate but equal Ultra Orthodox program, all lend support to the department's dedication to its mission.

However, as detailed in the general report and further in this report, it is unclear whether the students who become licensed after graduation have the appropriate level of competence to practice in both audiology and speech-language pathology. Hadassah follows the regulations and meets the requirements that the CHE and the Ministry of Health mandate for the practice of the profession. However, this committee recommends that the CHE and the Ministry of Health (MOH) together with the departments thoroughly reconsider all educational and clinical practicum requirements in communication disorders.

**Service:**

In the area of service, the department's evidence is adequate. It organizes workshops at the medical school, operates the Adler Aphasia Center, and evaluates and treats patients with communication disorders at its small but operative clinic.

**Diversity:**

The professionals educated by the department offer hearing and speech-language services at a variety of multilingual, multicultural practicum sites. Hadassah's provision of coursework and workshops for immigrants who have professional education in speech-language pathology (but who do not meet Israel's current standards for the practice of the profession), is also commendable.

**Research:**

The department reports that it promotes research. Its self-study report indicates that full-time faculty members attend national and international meetings. Currently, most of the research of the faculty is either in the proposal or submission stages. Some research has been published in respected journals.

Hadassah College is not a research institution. Therefore, these research activities are notable. It is difficult, however, to see how they can be further maintained or expanded without additional resources and manpower to the department.

**3. Study Programs**

Everyone interviewed, from administrators to students, recognized that the B.A. program of 177 credits distributed over 3.5 years is intense. The B.A. program focuses on preparing students in both audiology and speech-language pathology. In addition, the recent initiation of licensure requires 1000 hours of practicum across both areas and passing the MOH's licensure exam before starting any kind of professional work. Having two parallel academic programs necessitates a doubling of coursework for some of the professors. Classes for the Ultra-Orthodox students are held at an off-site venue located at the Jerusalem Technological Center Campus. Their speech-language pathology practica tend to be carried out in their specific communities, and audiology practica are completed in the on-campus audiology clinic.

Year 1 is focused on basic sciences and observation of normally developing populations in natural environments such as day care centers and senior centers. Year 2 is focused on clinical information, and students observe professionals with clinical populations. Years 3 and 3.5 continue academic preparation of clinical topics, and students participate in clinical practicum in the college clinic and/or outside placements. Many students observe or provide services in the onsite Adler Aphasia Center that is part of the department's clinical facility. Participation in clinical integration courses in audiology and speech-language pathology entails engagement in case presentations and analyses. There is much emphasis on students learning to write reflections on what they observe and do in practicum.

Some academic and clinical work is done in groups rather than individual projects. The program of 177 credits is excessive and yet does not cover all clinical areas such as autism, feeding, and pervasive developmental disorders.

Despite the heavy academic and clinical load, students tend to have very high grades. Faculty members appear aware of some potential grade inflation, but they attribute the high grades to the excellence of the students. Faculty members state that they are moving to create a variety of styles of examinations, rather than relying so heavily on multiple-choice final exams that contribute to the majority of a semester's grade. It was also noted that very few assignments that are given throughout any course are graded, such that students lack formative feedback on their work.

Documentation of practicum hours is problematic. While faculty and students are aware of the 1000-hour requirement for licensure, neither group was able to delineate clearly the specific number of hours in observation versus direct clinical work, in individual versus group contexts, or by direct diagnostic versus treatment hours for specific disorders. Additional documentation regarding delineation for clinical hours was shared with the committee following the site visit; however, it lacked substantial detail and a clearly articulated standard for which specific types of clinical experiences could be counted within any given category.

Clinical faculty members from the college rarely observe students in external practicum placements. Evaluation of students' practicum performance is also limited. The current form used to document evaluation of clinical practicum is cursory and not based on current models of clinical practicum evaluation available internationally. For example, there are major clinical areas in speech-language clinical practicum that are not evaluated including diagnostic planning, implementation of diagnostic protocols, and report writing.

When asked about the combined speech-language pathology and audiology curriculum, faculty and students generally appeared to think this was satisfactory although all acknowledged that few alumni work in both areas. Professionals practicing in speech-language pathology posit that having a background in audiology helps them work more effectively with clients who have hearing impairments despite the fact they do not provide audiology services. The combined program appears to come from a tradition of professional preparation rather than an analysis of actual professional work that alumni do post graduation or study of existing professional preparation models in other countries.

**Recommendations:**

- **Examination Format:** Faculty members should be encouraged to use a variety of formative and summative assessment methods in classes and not rely to such an extent on multiple-choice final examinations. Also, reliance on group work and assessments should be reviewed to assure that students are evaluated according to their individual knowledge and

skills. This may be difficult for faculty with heavy teaching loads and large classes that do not have teaching assistants. The administration should provide support for teaching assistants across all classes or reduce the number of students admitted each year.

- **Documentation:** Another immediate need is in the area of documentation of practicum hours. Practicum hours should be delineated in detail for each student. Definition of what hours constitute observation versus direct individual diagnostic or intervention hours will help faculty and students understand the depth of training provided. Hours that are obtained as part of group versus individual observation and direct clinical work should be separated. Further delineation of the types of direct individual hours per classification of disorder would also help faculty members understand and monitor the clinical areas in which their students are being prepared. At the very least, hours should be documented by semester and cumulatively. The following chart is an example for one way of doing this.

### Summary of Clinical Hours

	<b>Pediatric</b>				<b>Adult</b>		
	Observation	Direct Individual	Direct Group		Observation	Direct Individual	Direct Group
<b><u>Diagnostic</u></b>							
Hearing							
Speech							
Total							
<b><u>Treatment</u></b>							
Speech Language							
Hearing							
Total							
<b><u>Counseling</u></b>							
<b><u>Other</u></b> (define)							
Total							
<b><u>Total</u></b>							

- **Clinical Skills Evaluation:** The department should develop a more comprehensive and sensitive system for evaluation of students' practica in both speech-language pathology and audiology. Clinical faculty should review clinical evaluation forms from a variety of clinical training programs from other countries. This will help create a more in-depth and

sensitive tool to measure student clinical performance over time and provide feedback to students during on and off-campus practica.

- **Professional Tracks:** The department should consider the development of separate curricula to prepare speech-language pathologists versus audiologists at the B.A. level and possibly at the M.A. level. The department should consider a full year of core basic science coursework and observation across both normal and clinical populations followed by specialization in the remaining years. Separate programs would allow for more in-depth study of each professional area, a more reasonable number of credits for the B.A. degree, smaller class sizes, less competition for practicum sites for all students in speech-language pathology and audiology, more opportunity for elective courses, and an opportunity to move students into a graduate degree within the department. See the general report for examples of various models that could be considered for the academic programs. This is an intermediate need that should be addressed by the next CHE evaluation.

#### **4. Organization**

There is strong evidence of ongoing communication between program representatives and the higher administration. The president of the institution and vice president/head of academic administration are knowledgeable about the program, the nature of the field, and the strengths of the faculty, students, and clinical programs. The president acknowledges that the communication disorders program faculty is responsible for an extensive amount of academic and clinical effort. The program has garnered strong support in the form of three new faculty positions in conjunction with the anticipated opening of a new M.A. program in the coming academic year<sup>2</sup>.

The administrative heads and faculty have been highly involved in program development. Although this has increased their workloads, it has also enriched their sense of ownership in the program. Faculty involvement is typically by committee. Heads of departments meet every two weeks. The academic and administrative heads of the department meet every week, and they also confer regularly with the leader of the Ultra Orthodox program. Adjunct faculty members do not appear to be highly aware of details regarding day-to-day operations of the department, and most were not involved significantly in the preparation of the department's Self-Evaluation report. The faculty and staff at the departmental level are not involved in any discussions or decision making regarding student funding.

The Department of Communication Disorders falls under Hadassah College's School of Life Sciences. However, due to the organizational approach at the PBC level, the field of Communication Disorders in Israel is not recognized as a life science

---

<sup>2</sup> The MA program was not part of this evaluation.

program for funding purposes. Instead, it is erroneously categorized as a para-professional field. This categorization should be reviewed by the PBC so that the funding paradigm for this Department can be improved. It should be recognized that the intensiveness of the training and clinical laboratory approach required in communication disorders is typical of the approach to education in other life sciences with clinical components. For example, the expenses entailed in contracting with the sites, site visits, institution's personnel to coordinate with the external sites, and administration are not encountered in many other life science programs. These expenses should be accounted for in the funding paradigm.

### **5. Teaching and Learning Outcomes**

For the purpose of their report to the CHE, the faculty engaged in a program of peer class visitation and evaluation. This is a creative approach and ensures that all are involved. However, there is not clear evidence that all faculty members are appropriate arbiters of excellent pedagogy. Also, such a plan requires significant time commitment of a group that is already overcommitted. This system of peer class visitation could be refined in the future. Further, it is unclear how results of peer evaluations of teaching are being incorporated into strategic programmatic changes.

Although syllabi include course objectives they do not specify measurable learning outcomes with corresponding means of assessment and performance criteria. Lecturing is used most commonly across the teaching staff as a means of disseminating course content. There is little solid evidence of instructors adapting teaching modes and ensuring active learning methods appropriate for diverse learning styles and varied course content. The director notes a strong interest in enhancing a focus on problem-based learning in the future. Numerous additional means of fostering active learning should be explored, along with appropriate means of assessment to enrich student learning.

A preponderance of high grades and a large proportion of students graduating cum laude suggest a lack of rigor and discriminating power in the student grading system. Grades are commonly determined through multiple-choice examinations, and there is a heavy focus on final examinations in calculating grades. The faculty members report that they have been encouraged to give more exams and writing assignments, although it does not appear that many have agreed to do this yet. Heavy weighting of final examination grades (80 to 100% of course grades determined through final examinations as stated in the report) is not indicative of formative assessment of individual student learning throughout a course. It also does not ensure engaged learning, orientation to diverse learning styles, or active integration of course content. Students note a major focus on final examination grades and a lack of consideration of many of their efforts throughout the course in the way they are evaluated.

Clinical integration courses offer solid means of synthesizing learning across multiple areas and application of knowledge gained. However, it is not clear how final grades reflect the effectiveness of each student's abilities in terms of synthesis and applied integration.

The director and the faculty report a greater department-wide focus on evidence-based practice and multiculturalism in course work, but such foci are not reflected in the content of course syllabi. Also, it appears that initiatives to infuse evidence-based practice or multiculturalism into the curriculum have not been assessed programmatically.

The report itself provides ample evidence of good monitoring of scholarly productivity, and the program should be encouraged to continue such monitoring. Although there are not clear metrics about what is expected, productivity is impressive in light of teaching and clinical loads.

In the report, student evaluations of teaching are said to reflect student satisfaction, not quality. It is ironic, then, that the only awards (administered at the college level) are based solely on student evaluations of teaching. Some programmatic changes are made based on logistics and practicalities more than on ideal student learning. An example is the elimination of the fourth-year clinical practicum due to a lack of clinical sites and supervisors.

There is not a clear means of using students' feedback about the quality of off-campus sites and outside supervision to improve future off-campus experiences. The response rate of third- and fourth-year students concerning evaluation of off campus sites and external supervision is extremely low and thus not meaningful. It will be important for the department to require all students to complete the evaluations as a requirement for credit in the course.

Evaluations forms for peer evaluations of teaching, student admissions, evaluation of clinical practicum supervision, and student clinical performance are very brief, and lack detail that would be helpful in terms of using results to inform critical changes for mentoring of students and teaching staff and for program improvement. Exit interviews are reportedly carried out with all graduating students. How interview results are used in strategic planning is unclear. Follow-up with alumni is poor. No clear steps are in place to improve this important aspect of programmatic assessment.

Overall, the program would benefit from shared reading and discussion of literature on educational outcomes and student mentoring and related evaluation literature, and taking an active part in international forums about enhancing pedagogy and assessment in CSD. As the program continues to mature and as the new M.A. program comes online, it will be important for the faculty to develop a solid multifaceted formative and summative assessment program to monitor program quality and to shape ongoing strategic program modifications.

## **6. Practicum Sites**

There is a crisis in the ability of the program to arrange suitable practicum experiences for the students. The crisis derives from several factors:

a. Competition with existing accredited and new as yet unaccredited communication disorders programs. Two new programs (that were not evaluated by the committee) have increased the competition for limited slots. It seems that one aspect of the competition is that one of the programs in a private college that is offering higher compensation to the practicum sites than is possible in the public universities or colleges. Thus, the established program is having difficulty in maintaining its relationships with practicum sites that accept students from a competitor due to higher compensation.

b. The dispersion of suitable practicum sites is uneven across Israel. The concentration is higher in the central areas than in either the north or south of the country.

c. Quality control of the practicum sites is uncertain. Except for a very basic form the students and/or supervisors at the practicum sites complete and hand back to the students, there is no mechanism for ensuring the quality of students' experiences nor the types of clinical experiences they gain.

d. Opportunities for experiences with some disorders and patient populations are very limited. For example, experience with patients with aphasia or autism is scarce. Experiences are far more frequent with pediatric compared to adult or geriatric clients. Thus, competencies with children are likely to be better developed than for with adults.

e. For students with special needs or whose native language is not Hebrew, the availability of suitable supervisory staff is limited. For example, the availability of Arabic speaking supervisors and faculty is limited, as are materials for clinical practice in that language.

f. At Hadassah Academic College, clinical practica typically entail multiple students assigned to a single site. This reduces greatly the hands-on experience that any one student receives.

g. There appears to be some utilization of private practices for practicum placements for the Ultra Orthodox students, but these options are limited.

### **Recommendations:**

- The committee was informed that a report has been presented to the CHE regarding analysis of this problem of competition for practicum sites. It is necessary that this problem be confronted in a unified approach across programs. The best scenario would include the accredited and non-accredited programs coming to an agreement concerning solutions that are reasonable for all parties.
- Consider selective use of private venues for student placement. If the quality of a private hospitals/medical practices or private practices can be verified, then such placements should be considered.
- Increase access to governmental agencies, such as autism centers. This would extend the types of clinical exposures for the students.

## **7. Students**

The bachelor's program attracts committed and motivated students, primarily women, into two parallel programs: those students who are matriculated in the Hadassah Academic College at the main campus and those in the Ultra Orthodox track. Admission to both programs is highly competitive, and affirmative action is enforced for minority and Ultra-Orthodox applicants. There is a low dropout rate among the students in both programs. Students are generally described as superb, mature, motivated, and serious. The number of students in both programs is large and has grown through the development of the Ultra-Orthodox program which opened in 2006. In 2005 there were 132 students enrolled, while in 2009 there were 182 students in the Academic College and 98 in the Ultra-Orthodox program, thus more than doubling the number of enrolled students.

Students comment on the personal attention and support they receive from faculty and the fact that they do not perceive themselves as a "number" in the program. Student whose mother tongue is Arabic have access to mentors who help with writing papers in Hebrew. Students perceive the program as very intense, particularly in the second year. Most students do, however, graduate within the 3.5-year program. Despite the heavy academic/practicum load, a number of students still work part-time to support themselves financially. Most students appreciate the exit interview where they are queried regarding their perception of the program.

The increasing number of students places a burden on faculty members who have heavy teaching loads and no teaching assistants. A large enrollment also encourages more group rather than individual work on projects, thus limiting individual evaluation of student work. Large student enrollment also increases the need for more practicum placements and supervisors, both within the college clinic and at outside practicum placements. This is especially problematic in light of the competition for external placement sites in the area

Current students and alumni are generally satisfied with the content of the B.A. academic program and some are interested in pursuing a master's or doctoral degree at a future time. There are some content areas that they reported as lacking. These included autism, feeding therapy, and pervasive developmental disorders. Many of the projects in classes and practicum are done in groups to reduce the teaching and supervision load as well as the academic burden on students.

### **Recommendation:**

- The number of admitted/enrolled students should be capped or reduced to maintain a comfortable class size and opportunities for individual practicum placements and supervision. . A limit on enrollment should be immediate and enforced until there is a significant opening in the number of available practicum sites and there is a commensurate increase in faculty to handle the teaching and supervision loads.

## **8. Human Resources**

The faculty is of high quality and highly motivated. However, the number of faculty members in the regular academic track is low. The student/faculty ratio is too high (56:1) and does not allow for sufficient teaching, clinical education, and research. Faculty members are heavily loaded, work at full capacity, and do not have enough time for research. The committee is not specifying an ideal ratio, especially in light of the complexity of factoring in part-time staff, and in recognition of the fact that ideal ratios do not necessarily translate to teaching excellence. Still, it may be helpful to consider some benchmarks with which the committee members are familiar. The maximum ratio in the US, when these were specified for clinical program accreditation in the same field, was 6:1.<sup>3</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

- Several additional faculty members are urgently needed. Areas of research and teaching specialization that are specifically lacking include pervasive developmental disorders, autism, swallowing, and stuttering. In addition, there is a strong demand for new faculty members to supervise the B.A. seminars and teach in the M.A. program.
- The faculty should be granted funds for research expenses and for sabbaticals to facilitate research activities.
- A clinical coordinator who goes into the field, observes students in the off-campus clinical practicum sites, and follows the students closely is urgently needed. Currently there are several faculty members who supervise in these sites in addition to their many other academic and clinical obligations. They are clearly overloaded.
- Teaching assistants who improve the quality of teaching are needed for increasing the number of written assignments and clinical reports, including integrative knowledge and insights.
- The addition of a clinical professor tenure track could help in attracting faculty members who divide their time between clinical work and research and who do not meet the research tenure track standards.
- Faculty members in the research track require submission to the CHE in order to proceed to the rank of associate and full professor. The Committee recommends that such faculty be encouraged and promoted to ensure the high quality of teaching and research in the college.

---

<sup>3</sup> Council on Academic Accreditation (2011). Academic program accreditation. Available at: <http://www.asha.org/academic/accreditation/>

## **9. Research**

The committee understands that Hadassah Academic College Jerusalem is not budgeted by the CHE as a research institution. Nevertheless, the faculty espouses a strong interest in research. There is a record of publications by several members of the department, most especially in the areas of clinical applications and test development. In this vein, there has been important work in test generation by one of the faculty members in Hadassah, whose tool regarding "Hebrew Language Assessment Test" has been implemented at each of the other accredited universities visited. There is fine work in both audiology and speech-language pathology. This research tends to be applied or clinical in nature rather than focused on basic science. There are indications, based on co-authorship, that the faculty members work collaboratively together. In efforts to maximize opportunities for research, the faculty members, have developed collaborative relationships with staff in other facilities.

Furthermore, there is a train of research that is particularly strong at Hadassah Academic College involving translation and normative studies of tests and materials from other sources into Hebrew and Arabic. In regard to development of clinical tools, the department is taking a leading role that has and will result in significant contributions to the field. An important example of this work is the translation of the Adler Aphasia Center's guide "The Stroke and Aphasia Handbook" into Hebrew and Arabic.

There is a plan to develop a speech perception research laboratory, to acquire the relevant equipment, and to hire the acoustic expert needed. The intent is to develop a line of research in speech perception in normally hearing and disordered populations. This laboratory would also facilitate the development and standardization of new evaluation materials in Hebrew.

It is noteworthy that the keen interest in participating in research is handicapped by the heavy teaching load and clinical responsibilities carried by the faculty. The problem is compounded by the lack of teaching assistants in this program. Thus, while there are many creative individuals with projects they wish to pursue, there is little tangible support for research available in the environment. The lack of available time for research has clear ramifications for the junior faculty's prospects for promotion if this issue is unaddressed.

### **Recommendation:**

- The members of the department are encouraged to apply for competitive grants to support their research projects. There is an increase in successful grant applications from college programs, so that the fact that Hadassah Academic College is not a university should not be viewed as a contraindication to submitting grant proposals. In this manner, research projects may be supported and faculty may potentially have more time to devote to their research work.

## **10. Infrastructure**

The department is situated in a modern facility on the main campus. It is well designed to meet most of the needs of an academic training program. Treatment rooms are well designed for observation by faculty and/or several students. The equipment in speech, voice and audiology is sophisticated and up-to-date. The facilities include an excellent and enthusiastic library staff with computer infrastructure that is modern and a sufficient number of terminals. Specialized books and journals in the field are available to the students and faculty

There is a noteworthy lack of adequate office space for faculty at all levels. Although the faculty did not cite this as a major impediment to their work, the shared office spaces were seen as a barrier to faculty members' development of research and execution of long-term projects. The cooperative approach of the faculty to sharing space was admirable, but the ramifications for project development, research, and privacy for student counseling are apparent<sup>4</sup>.

## **11. Self-Evaluation Process**

The department head and senior faculty have worked hard to implement the self evaluation process. Curriculum changes have been made over the past years and a process of self-evaluation activity has commenced.

This committee recommends that the organized mechanism for self-assessment begun by the CHE be continued, that the plans outlined by the department be reviewed, and if implemented, reported to the CHE.

Continuous evaluation and self-assessment (as well as writing interim reports), will enable the department to review the success of their future plans and to have a culture of continuous quality improvement.

### **Recommendation:**

- Include all faculty and administrators in future self-evaluation procedures, follow-up strategic planning, and implementation for programmatic improvements.

---

<sup>4</sup> The committee held its visits in the main Hadassah campus and did not visit the Ultra Orthodox campus.

## **12. General Recommendations and Timetable**

The Hadassah Academic College offers an intense program of study in communication sciences and disorders. The review committee was impressed by the involvement of the full-time faculty and the commitment to the students by all faculty members with whom we met during the site visit.

The recommendations that have been listed above have different levels of priority. We suggest that the approach to addressing these recommendations be viewed as near-term, intermediate term, and long-term goals. To summarize the recommendations according to this prioritization, we reiterate the goals below:

### **Near-term [0-2 years]:**

- Improve documentation of practicum hours. The review committee considers this an urgent priority.
- Address the practicum crisis through coordinated efforts among the accredited and non-accredited institutions.
- Develop a more comprehensive and sensitive system for evaluation of students' practicum in both speech-language pathology and audiology.
- Encourage faculty members to use a variety of formative and summative assessment methods in classes and not rely to such an extent on multiple-choice final examinations.
- Cap the number of admitted/enrolled students at current or reduced levels. This will help to maintain a manageable class size and increase opportunities for individual practicum placements and supervision.
- Recruit new faculty members who can supervise the B.A. seminars and teach in the M.A. program.
- Designate teaching assistants who improve the quality of teaching. This will allow faculty to increase the number of written assignments and clinical reports and improve students' integrative knowledge and insights.
- Develop and offer a continuing education program for clinical practicum supervisors.
- Encourage faculty members in the research track to work toward promotion and to submit their applications for the rank of associate and full professor to the CHE.

### **Intermediate-term [3-5 years]:**

- Recruit faculty members in the areas of pervasive developmental disorders, autism, swallowing, and stuttering.
- Consider the addition of a clinical professor tenure track to help in attracting faculty members who divide their time between clinical work and research and thus may not be able to meet the research tenure track standards.
- Despite the fact that Hadassah is not defined as a research institution, the committee recommends providing financial support through the college,

including grant money for research expenses and funding for sabbaticals, to facilitate research activities.

- Encourage faculty members to apply for competitive grants to support their research projects.
- Include all faculty and administrators in future self-evaluation procedures, follow-up strategic planning, and implementation for programmatic improvements.

**Long-term [6 years and beyond]:**

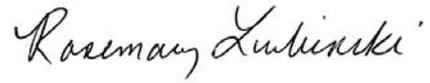
- Consider separate curricula to prepare speech-language pathologists versus audiologists at the B.A. level and possibly at the M.A. level. The future course of speech-language pathology and audiology in Israel may follow any of several different models. Please see the general report to the CHE for these concepts in detail.

**Signed by:**



---

Prof. Jaclyn Spitzer



---

Prof. Rosemary Lubinski



---

Prof. Deena Bernstein



---

Prof. Miriam Faust



---

Prof. Brooke Hallowell

## Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment



February, 2011

שר החינוך  
**Minister of Education**  
وزير التربية والتعليم

Prof. Jaclyn Spitzer  
Department of Otolaryngology, Head & Neck Surgery  
Columbia University  
USA

Dear Professor Spitzer,

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.

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 Communication Disorders Studies.

The composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Jaclyn Spitzer (Chair), Prof. Deena Bernstein, Prof. Miriam Faust, Prof. Brooke Hallowell and Prof. Rosemary Lubinski.

Ms. Yael Franks will coordinate the Committee's activities.

In your capacity as the Chair 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 chair of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Gideon Sa'ar  
Minister of Education,  
Chairperson, The Council for Higher Education

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

cc: Ms. Michal Neumann, The Quality Assessment Division  
Ms. Yael Franks, Committee Coordinator

---

רח' שבטי ישראל 34 ירושלים מיקוד 91911 • טל' 02-5602330 • פקסמיליה 02-5602246  
34 Shivtei Israel St' 91911 Jerusalem. Tel. 02-5602330. Fax 02-5602246  
شارع شبطي يسرائيل 34 . اورشليم القدس 91911 . هاتف 02-5602330 فاكس 02-5602246  
כתובת אתר ממשל זמין: <http://gov.il>  
כתובת אתר המשרד: <http://www.education.gov.il>

## **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, which came into effect in the academic year of 2004-2005. Within this framework, study-programs are to be evaluated approximately every six

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 to the importance of quality evaluation and to develop an internal culture of self-evaluation, as well as the required mechanisms;
- 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 (hereinafter "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 institutions and the academic units being evaluated – if possible - within 4-6 months of receiving the self-evaluation reports. 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, alumni, administrative staff, and any other persons it considers necessary.

2.3 The duration of the visits (at least one full day) will be coordinated with the chairperson of the Committee.

2.4 Following the visit, the Committee will submit the CHE with:

1. A final report on each of the evaluated departments,
2. A general reports on the state of the discipline in the Israeli higher education system. The general report will include recommendations to the CHE for standards and potential state-wide changes in the evaluated field of study.

2.5 The reports will be sent to the institutions and the academic units for their response.

2.6 The reports and Committee's findings will be submitted to the CHE and discussed within its various forums.

### **3. Conflict of Interest Policy**

3.1 In order to avoid situations that may question the credibility and integrity of the evaluation process, and in order to maintain its ethical, professional and impartial manner, before issuing their Letter of Appointment members and chairperson of the evaluation Committee will sign a Declaration on Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality.

3.2 In the event that a member of the Committee is also a current or former faculty member at an institution being evaluated, he/she will not take part in any visits or discussions regarding that institution.

### **4. The Individual Reports**

4.1 The final reports of the evaluation Committee shall address every institution separately.

4.2 The final reports shall include recommendations on topics listed in the guidelines for self-evaluation, including:

- The goals, aims and mission statement of the evaluated academic unit and study programs
- The study program
- The academic faculty
- The students
- The organizational structure
- Research
- 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

### **5. The Recommended Structure of the Reports**

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

5.1 General background concerning the evaluation process; the names of the members of the Committee and its coordinator; and a short overview of the Committee's procedures.

5.2 A general description of the institution and the academic unit being evaluated.

5.3 An executive summary that will include a brief description of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic unit and program being evaluated.

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

- 5.4 This section will be based on evidence gathered from the self-evaluation report and the topics examined by the Committee during the site visit.
- 5.5 For each topic examined, the report will present a summary of the Committee's findings, the relevant information, and their analysis.

**Part C –Recommendations:**

- 5.6 This section will include comprehensive conclusions and recommendations regarding the evaluated academic unit and the study program according to the topics in part B.
- 5.7 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.***

**Part D - Appendices:**

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

**6. The General report**

In addition to the individual reports concerning each study program, the Committee shall submit to the CHE a general report regarding the status of the evaluated field of study within the Israeli institutions of higher education. The report should also evaluate the state and status of Israeli faculty members and students in the international arena (in the field), as well as offer recommendations to the CHE for standards and potential state-wide changes in the evaluated field of study.

**We urge the Committees 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.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

**Thursday, May 12, 2011**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>
09:30-10:15	Opening session with the heads of the institution and the senior staff member appointed to deal with quality assessment	Prof. Nava Ben-Zvi (President) Dr.Zachi Milgrom (Vice President and Head of Academic Administration)
10:15-11:00	Meeting with head of the School of Health & Life Sciences	Prof. Shmuel Razin (Head of School of Health and Life Sciences)
11:00-11:45	Meeting with the academic and administrative heads of the Department of Communication Disorders	Dr. Sara Melijson (Communication Disorders Department Chair) Dr. Rachel Fraenkel Dr. Irit Katzenberger
11:45-12:30	Meeting with faculty and representatives of relevant committees *	Prof. Asher Ornoy Prof. Haim Sohmer Prof. Bella Kotik
12:30-13:15	Lunch (in the same room)	Closed-door working meeting of the Committee
13:15-13:45	Tour of campus (classes, library, offices of faculty members, computer labs etc.)	
13:45-14:30	Meeting with senior faculty*	Dr. Avivit Ben David Dr. Ronit Priner Dafna Olenik Sari Lotem Irit Koren Dr.Ariela Nachmani
14:30-15:30	Closed-door working meeting of the committee	

**Sunday, May 15, 2011**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>
9:30-10:15	Meeting with the clinical supervisors	Haya Levy, Sari Lotem, Dvora Gordon (Audiology) Mimi Gerstenfeld, Dafna Olenik Tzila Shwartzshtein (Speech & Language)
10:30-11:15	Meeting with adjunct academic faculty*	Haya Levi Dr. Ruth Lit Afori Rona Doolman Dr. Sara Pantelat Dr. Miriam Geal Dor Leonid Kriksanov Etti Mor Yoni Shimoni Rima Jhabara Dvora Gordon
11:15-12:00	Meeting with students**	
12:00-12:45	Meeting with Alumni**	
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch and Closed Door Working Meeting of the Committee	
14:00-15:00	Summation meeting with heads of department and institution	Prof. Nava Ben-Zvi Dr. Zachi Milgrom Prof. Shmuel Razin Dr. Sara Melijson

\*The heads of the institution and academic unit or their representatives will not attend these meetings.

\*\*The visit will be conducted in English with the exception of students who may speak in Hebrew and anyone else who feels unable to converse in English.