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Report for: The Israeli Council of Higher Education.

From: Professor Gila Sher

Re: Haifa University's Implementation of the Recommendations made by the External Evaluation Team of Philosophy Departments in Israel, November 2009

I. Data

This report is based on:

1. Report of the External Evaluation Team for the Council for Higher Education, November 2009 (Evaluation of the Philosophy Department at Haifa University).
2. Self Evaluation of Philosophy - Report on Implementation of the Committee's Recommendations. Office of the Rector and the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities (Undated).
3. Letter of Response to the Report of the Committee for Evaluation of Philosophy, by Meir Hemmo, Department of Philosophy, University of Haifa, 3 January 2010.
4. Letter of Response related to the Report of the Evaluation Committee in the Field of Philosophy at the University of Haifa. Professor Yossi Ben-Arzi, Rector, 26 January 2010.
5. Faculty Roll and other Documents by the Philosophy Department, University of Haifa.
6. Response of Chair of Philosophy Department to Questions Concerning Hiring & Recruitment in the Academic Years 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12.

II. Implementation of Recommendations to the University

*Levels of Urgency: *** - most urgent, ** - next most urgent, * - pressing need.*

- 1.*** Replacing retirees - ***Step toward implementation / No commitment***

- 2.* Expanding the size of the faculty - ***Step toward implementation / No commitment.***
- 3.** Increasing financial support for graduate students - ***Partial implementation.***
- 4.** PhD's as teaching assistants - ***Not implemented*** due to circumstances beyond control of the university.
- 5.** Administrative staffing - ***Not implemented.***
- 6.** Additional teaching assistants - ***Not implemented*** due to lack of financial resources.
7. Direct track (a) - ***Implemented.***
8. Direct track (b) - ***Implemented.***
9. Interuniversity: expanding educational horizons - ***Will be implemented*** by Graduate Studies Authority.
10. Placement - ***Implemented.***

III. Implementation of Recommendations to the Department of Philosophy

*Levels of Urgency: *** - most urgent, ** - next most urgent, * - pressing need.*

- 1.*** Developing “cluster” (service) courses - ***Implemented.***
- 2.** Undergraduate analytical writing skills - ***Implemented.***
- 3.** Introducing structure into BA curriculum - ***Partial implementation.***
- 4.** Women among the faculty - ***Recommendation approved.***
- 5.* Monitoring undergraduate teaching - ***Implemented.***
- 6.* Hiring priority - ***Recommendation approved.***
- 7.* Tenure - ***Implemented.***
8. Inadequate coverage - ***Implementation dependent on resources.***
9. Expanding the scope of courses available to double majors - ***Implemented.***

10. Interdisciplinary - ***Implemented.***
11. Interuniversity: Promoting educational horizons - ***Implemented.***
12. Interuniversity: Promoting faculty exchange - ***Implemented.***
13. Maintain high standards - ***Implemented.***
14. Placement service - ***Partial implementation.***
15. Direct track - ***Partial implementation.***
16. Mentoring - ***Implemented.***
17. Research in Hebrew - ***Approval & partial implementation.***
18. PhD seminars - ***Implemented.***
19. Commons room - ***Implemented.***

IV. Discussion

The department of philosophy has by and large adequately implemented the external team's recommendations, and I commend it for this. The university has also implemented some of the recommendations but the implementation has only been partial and there is no sufficient commitment to implementing some of the recommendations, including the most urgent recommendation: replacement of retirees. Let me explain.

On the positive side, the university is committed to keeping "enough teaching staff to enable a varied, updated, and most important - highly qualified study program" and intends to continue the method of recruiting new teaching staff through the Alon Scholarships, a method that served the department very well in the past. This year, the university authorized a job search (Alon Fellowship) for the philosophy department. Furthermore, the university raised the sum of scholarships for one subgroup of graduate students, namely MA students (as well as BA students). Moreover, the university has implemented the two direct track recommendations, is planning to implement the interuniversity recommendation through the Graduate studies authority, and has implemented the placement recommendation.

On the negative side, the university has not expressed a direct commitment to the first two recommendations of the external team: replacing all retirees in a timely fashion (regarded by the external team as of highest urgency) and expanding the size of the faculty (regarded by the external team as a persistent need) and in the two and a half years that have passed since the

recommendations were issued the university has authorized only one junior job search (Alon Fellowship). In addition, the university did not implement the administrative staffing recommendation (regarded by the external team as of second highest urgency) and did not increase financial support for PhD students (second highest urgency).

V. Current State of the Philosophy Department

The philosophy department is a small but excellent department and it is continuing to develop very nicely. However, it is facing a few retirements in the next few years, and because of its small size any loss of faculty threatens to curtail its positive trajectory.

VI. Conclusions / Recommendations

In view of (V), it is of the utmost importance that the university commit itself to authorizing replacements to the forthcoming retirements in the philosophy department as soon as they take place.

It is also important that the university implement the staffing recommendation as well as the financial support for PhD students recommendation.