



Ms. Tamar Efrati  
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)  
P.O.B 4037, Jerusalem 91040, Israel

לשכת הרקטור

Office of  
The Rector

Dear Ms Efrati

Professor Gila Sher kindly commented on the implementation of the recommendations made by the external evaluation team of Philosophy Departments in November 2009. Let me refer to those areas in which she noted that the implementation was only partial. I am also enclosing a letter written by Professor Enoch, the chair of the department, who comments on the issue of recruitment in detail.

1-2: replacing retirees: The Hebrew University considers the Department of Philosophy an essential unit in the academic fabric of the university, and therefore it is committed to maintaining a critical mass of faculty members in Philosophy. In spite of the severe financial situation of the university, we made special effort to attract young faculty members, and we succeeded. Last year (2011) we recruited two new faculty members, next year we made an offer to a third person. We also made an offer to a fourth person who will be coming in 2014, and to a fifth person who will be coming in 2015. All these offers were accepted, ensuring a steady flow of faculty members to the department. I should note that 2 of the 5 newcomers are females (comment #16), one will have a joint position with the program "philosophy, political science, and economics", and one will be affiliated with the sister department of the philosophy of science.

6: Administration of the PhD program: According to the new framework of doctoral studies at the Hebrew University, the department, together with the school of Philosophy and Religion, are responsible for the selection of PhD students, determining their course of studies, and monitoring their progress.

9,18: Direct PhD track: The Hebrew University allows for direct PhD track. The implementation depends on the units' willingness to trust the admittance criteria available at the time students apply to graduate school, that is, during the last year of the BA studies. Some departments make strong case for selecting students only after they have proven their quality during their MA studies. Accordingly, we (the University Administration) emphasize the importance of designing the Research-MA track that allows students

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to graduate in two years and continue their PhD immediately after. When students excel during their MA studies they are supported financially to allow them to concentrate on their studies.

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7-8: We agree that the situation is far from ideal, and we are trying to raise money for improvement of the physical infrastructure and support of students. This summer we had the groundbreaking ceremony to launch construction of new Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities. This school will improve conditions for graduate students and faculty members in the Humanities.

We thank Professor Sher for her work.

Sincerely,

Prof Yaacov Schul  
Vice Rector

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