



Committee for the Evaluation of
Occupational Therapy Studies Program

University of Haifa
Department of Occupational Therapy

Evaluation Report

September 2012

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Chapter 1: General Background

During its meeting on November 11, 2011, the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate departments in the fields of Occupational Therapy.

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:

- Prof. Winnie Dunn, University of Kansas Medical Center, USA– Committee Chair
- Prof. Tal Jarus, The University of British Columbia, Canada
- Prof. Annette Majnemer, McGill University, Canada
- Prof. Kenneth J. Ottenbacher, University of Texas Medical Branch, USA

Ms. Daniella Sandler - Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the CHE requested the following from the Committee:

- Examine the self-evaluation reports submitted by institutions that provide study programs in Occupational Therapy
- Present the CHE with final reports with findings and recommendations for each of the evaluated academic units and study programs.
- Submit to the CHE a general report regarding the status of the examined field within the Israeli system of higher education and relevant recommendations.

The Committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

The first stage of the quality assessment process consisted of self-evaluation, including the preparation of a self-evaluation report by the institutions under review. This process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's guidelines as specified in the document entitled "The Self-Evaluation Process: Recommendations and Guidelines" (October 2010).

Chapter 2: Committee Procedures

Committee members were given an overview of higher education in Israel and a description of the Israeli CHE at their first meeting on June 12, 2012. They also discussed Occupational Therapy Studies Programs in Israel and fundamental issues concerning the committee's quality assessment activity. Committee members had received copies of the departmental reports before this date.

During June 2012 committee members conducted two-day site visits to Tel Aviv, Haifa and Hebrew University.

This report refers to the Occupational Therapy Department at The University of Haifa. The Occupational Therapy program began as a certificate program within the External Studies Unit that was a part of the Faculty of Education and was intended for students holding a BA degree, beginning in 1982. The Occupational Therapy Department was established in 1986 as a joint venture of the University of Haifa and the Technion with the overall objective of providing professional education for entry level general practitioners. The Department is part of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, which is an expanding multidisciplinary faculty at the University of Haifa. The program evolved into a 3.5 year program.

In addition, an undergraduate study program was introduced in the summer of 2005 for Ultra-Orthodox students in Bnei Brak with a very high concentration of Ultra-Orthodox families. Both programs, with their different orientations, maintain the high academic standards required by the three and a half-year undergraduate program, which emphasizes humanism, excellence and multicultural values.

The Committee's visit to the University took place on June 17-18, 2012 and it included two days of intensive meetings with appropriate administrators, tenure and tenure-track faculty, and BA, MSc and PhD students and visits to libraries and laboratory facilities as well as Clinical Sites. We thank appropriate individuals for their involvement in our proceedings. Their input allowed us to explore many of the issues raised in the self-evaluation report.

The schedule, including the list of participants representing the institution, is attached as **Appendix 2**.

Chapter 3: Executive Summary

The Department of Occupational Therapy at University of Haifa has a strong and balanced program of teaching and research. The Senior Faculty members are extremely productive with less than optimal resources. They attract highly qualified students at all levels of education; the demand is much greater than the Department's ability to serve student applicants. Their research program is quite productive, and their work is internationally recognized. We make detailed recommendations below, which focus on the need to establish stronger inter-professional teaching and research, establish a formal mentoring process among faculty members, expand teaching, meeting and research space, develop a post-doctoral program and identify new sources for funding students and research programs. The Department needs to develop a formal mechanism for continuous quality improvement. We also make recommendations for oversight of the relationship with the Technion. In partnership with the University, the Department needs to restructure and expand the graduate programs, with appropriate funding for students and research programs. The University also needs to examine the applicability of the promotion and tenure process and criteria for hiring.

The report is organized by topics, with a brief summary of each topic and a listing of strengths. The last section of the report summarizes all the recommendations.

Chapter 4: Department Evaluation

1. Mission, goals

The vision of the Department of Occupational Therapy focuses on research as the basis for two guiding principles: 1) The enhancement of occupational therapy as an academic discipline, and 2) excellence in professional occupational therapist education. They aspire to bridge between research and practice with their work. The Department views research as essential to the advancement of OT as a profession and works towards enhancing research skills, emphasizing interdisciplinary research; they encourage the incorporation of researchers from the social welfare and health sciences into OT research. They promote excellence in professional OT Education by fostering evidence based learning and competence in the range of expertise necessary for entry into the profession.

STRENGTHS

The department has a balanced mission and vision, and they are navigating between the teaching and research missions successfully currently. They clearly focus equally strongly on both teaching and research.

The Higher Administration of the University views the Department of Occupational Therapy as a 'gem' of their university. They indicate that the Department of Occupational Therapy strongly meets the university's mission and goals, and is in a growth period as well.

2. Study programs: curriculum, evaluation of all degrees

The Department includes Baccalaureate programs on the University of Haifa's main campus and the campus at Bnei Brak (this program follows the same curriculum, but we did not interview students or faculty from this program, visit this campus or conduct a formal review of this program); Master's program with two tracks (thesis and non-thesis), and a PhD program started in the 2010/2011 academic year.

The Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences also includes two administrative units providing service and training to the Department: the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center and the Continuing Education Unit.

STRENGTHS

The Faculty and Department include a focus on the "Interdisciplinary Approach" to education, research, and clinical service. Faculty supported interdisciplinary activities include an annual Research Fair, an annual Dean's Prize for interdisciplinary research, a course at the Faculty level on the Theory and Practice of Interdisciplinary Team Work, and the establishment of several Concentrations of Excellence emphasizing interdisciplinary scholarship (e.g., Aging and Mental Health).

The Department has a commitment to multiculturalism; the Department of Occupational Therapy faculty created a course on multicultural issues available to students in all departments.

A formal mechanism is in place to obtain regular and comprehensive feedback and survey information from students regarding courses and clinical training activities.

The program is highly respected in the local clinical community.

The curriculum prepares students for practice, i.e., they have very high pass rates on national exams.

The Master's program is well established and offers a thesis and non-thesis track, which makes it attractive to a wide range of students.

The Department established a new PhD program in the 2010/2011 academic year and offers opportunities to expand advanced graduate education within the Department.

3. Organization: Committees, decision process

The Department of Occupational Therapy is one of ten departments within the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences at the University of Haifa. The Department operates in a very participatory fashion where faculty members share administrative duties. The adjunct faculty members are also involved in both committee work and the departmental monthly meeting. Currently the Department has consolidated their work to three primary committees: the BA, the MSc and the PhD committees. Those committees are responsible for the admission, curriculum and student issues of the respective programs. Strategic planning and promotion and tenure issues are the responsibility of the Departmental Council.

STRENGTHS

There is a solid and well-functioning committee structure, with full involvement of all faculty members.

Senior faculty members are involved in faculty and University level committees and their contributions are valued.

The different roles are well divided among faculty members.

Faculty members, particularly senior staff, are involved in the decision-making processes.

4. Teaching and Learning outcomes: Teaching methods; evaluation and improvement of teaching; methods used to evaluate learning outcomes

The Department of Occupational Therapy has developed a solid curricular plan for each of their programs. They have strong senior faculty, community based adjunct faculty and a network of experienced clinical preceptors to support their Bachelor's program (BA). They employ a wide range of teaching methods. Supervisors report that the students are strong, and well prepared to enter the occupational therapy profession. Additionally, this program offers a BA degree based on the same curricular design for women who are Orthodox Jews (Merchav Program, Bnei Brak); clinical instructors and clinical preceptors all report that these students are equivalently prepared, even though they take courses separately from the Haifa coursework. The faculty members are proud to offer their curriculum

in this culturally sensitive manner, believing that they are building the capacity of this part of their community.

The Department of Occupational Therapy has a formal relationship with Technion University for teaching occupational therapy students, and for maintaining a clear link with the Medical School faculty for research and other professional activities. When they filed their report, they indicated that they were dissatisfied with the teaching and scheduling of the Technion courses. At our meeting, they reported that they had met with Technion leadership, and had worked out a new arrangement for teaching content that is satisfactory for everyone. Some arrangements have not been completed and need to be addressed before the next year.

The senior faculty members also offer a Master's degree (MSc), and in the last 2 years have begun offering a Doctoral degree (PhD). They have more than 40 MSc students and 12 PhD students. Their primary methods involve directed study and mentoring. They include colleagues from other disciplines to support the graduate programs (e.g., anthropology and statistics) to provide students with a broader view.

The Haifa University has a strong mechanism for evaluating and supporting teaching. The Teaching Assistants reported that they have had help from Center for Teaching in pedagogical techniques and improvements. Additionally, the Department of Occupational Therapy has a strong structure for supporting faculty members, responding to student suggestions and for mentoring clinical colleagues who participate in supervision, problem-based learning and adjunct teaching responsibilities. Full time and part time faculty members plan together, providing feedback in co-teaching situations and collaborate to support students who need extra attention to be successful.

The faculty members, adjunct faculty members and clinical preceptors all have a strong commitment to the Department of Occupational Therapy at Haifa University. They talk about feeling supported, and are included in planning, decision-making and problem solving. In spite of heavy teaching loads, each member feels a sense of cohesiveness and commitment to the department.

STRENGTHS

The Occupational Therapy senior faculty members are committed and strong in teaching at the BA and graduate levels.

The adjunct faculty members and clinical preceptors are very committed to the Department of Occupational Therapy at Haifa University. Additionally they felt that the Haifa students are well prepared for practice.

There is a strong internal and informal structure for supporting teaching among faculty.

They have a large number of students returning for graduate education, suggesting that they offer a strong program.

5. Students: Actual admission data (including exceptions); grading, services; outcomes alumni, etc.

We met students from the BA, MSc and PhD levels. The OT program is very competitive and able to attract highly talented students. For the BA program, around 400 applicants compete for the 50-60 spots the program offers, where the mean admission score ranged between 633-684. Approximately 240 BA students, 45 MSc and 12 PhD students are enrolled in the department.

STRENGTHS

The Department attracts high quality students to all of its existing programs as evidenced by excellent exam scores (Table 3.4.2.c, p. 58). The graduates of the Department are well prepared academically and have an excellent pass rate on the national licensing exam.

Clinical preceptors spoke highly of the occupational therapy students, believing that they are well prepared for clinical placements.

MSc students benefit from the opportunity to be hired as a teaching assistant. They view this as a great opportunity for professional and personal growth.

All graduate students are employed and/ or have scholarships to support their graduate studies.

Students from all levels feel highly supported by the faculty members, preceptors and administrative staff.

6. Human resources: Faculty quality and quantity; achievements; promotions; updated; fields, number; ratio; administrative staff, etc.

The Head of the Department at the time the self-evaluation report was Dr. Sara Rosenblum. As of October 2011, Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger assumed the position as Head of the Department.

The current occupational therapy faculty complement includes 11 full time senior academic staff (lecturer to full professor) that includes 10 tenure stream (research stream; 6/10 tenured) faculty members and 1 full time faculty member on the expert track. In addition there are 9 teaching assistants, approximately 8 research assistants and numerous Adjunct Academic Staff. Research assistants are funded for the most part by internal research grants. There is a part-time manager of clinical studies and 2 part-time fieldwork counselors. Bnei Brak faculty members are paid by a separate budget within the Department's funding. Administration indicated that there are additional Senior Academic staff positions available for strong applicants.

A small number of adjunct faculty members are not occupational therapists but provide expertise relevant to the program content. For example, several physicians from the Technion teach basic science courses. There are 4 administrative positions for the Department. The PhD students especially appreciate having access to a secretary for support.

STRENGTHS

The faculty has wide-ranging clinical and research expertise that enrich the content of the curriculum. Faculty members have strong academic credentials.

The primary core occupational therapy courses are taught by occupational therapists, most with a PhD.

The vast majority of full time faculty members have successful productive programs of research.

The faculty members are committed to keeping abreast of the most recent scientific knowledge in occupational therapy. They participate regularly in national and international conferences, publish and collaborate with researchers abroad.

Senior faculty members participate in search committees to recruit potential academic faculty.

Academic staff in the Department is highly committed to the program and are a cohesive support group for both faculty and students.

Teaching assistants and research assistants are particularly helpful in supporting the teaching and research programs respectively.

7. Research: Internal and external allocations, including grants, fellowships; publication, international status

The Department has a commitment to knowledge development and scientific training. They illustrate their commitment in the Department's statement of their perception of research (Section 4.1, p. 105).

“As a research institution, the University of Haifa expects all its faculty members to devote a considerable amount of their time to research activities. The degree and quality of this activity is demonstrated by published research, active participation in national and international conferences, and the receipt of research grants. Research is viewed as the foundation of occupational therapy in general and of our department in particular, and is supported and encouraged by the University of Haifa. Moreover, research is perceived by the Department as the basis for further development of occupational therapy as an academic discipline as well as promoting excellence in professional education.” (p. 105)

The Department identified their areas of research emphasis to include cognition/meta-cognition; sensory processing; dysgraphia; and technology in rehabilitation. The Department focuses on various special populations with the following disabilities: autism; atypical sensory processing; intellectual disability; ADHD (attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder); learning disabilities; and mental illness. The Department is committed to developing a research profile consistent with the Mission of the University of Haifa.

STRENGTHS

Faculty members have excellent research training, backgrounds, and qualifications. All senior academic faculty members have earned PhDs.

Faculty members have published more than 220 refereed journal articles and numerous book chapters and conference proceedings/abstracts in the past five years.

The Department has dedicated research space and two funded research labs - the laboratory for the study of Complex Human Activity and Participation (CHAP) and the Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology (LIRT).

Established collaborations exist with researchers in other departments and centers within the University and abroad (Appendix 4.11).

Faculty members have received more than 40 local, national and international awards for scholarly productivity during the past five years (e.g., Service Commendation, American Occupational Therapy Association to Prof. Weiss).

The Department has a recently established PhD program and a history of successful research training at the Masters level.

8. Infrastructure: Labs, library, IT, etc

The Department of Occupational Therapy is situated on the 9th floor of the Eshkol Tower. We toured the library, Karten Centre and research laboratories. The library provides the necessary learning materials and journals for the students. There are two research labs within the Department of Occupational Therapy: the Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology and the Laboratory for the study of Complex Human Activity and Participation. Teaching space is available throughout the campus, but was not part of the tour.

STRENGTHS

The building is fairly modern and is well ventilated. It is wheelchair accessible.

The research laboratory spaces are very well equipped although small in size.

The library has just been renovated and meets the learning needs of the Department.

The Karten Centre has a clinical program focused on child development and assistive technologies. This is an excellent resource, used extensively in teaching. It provides much needed services to the local community and therefore makes an important contribution to society.

Classrooms appear to be adequately sized for the large classes in the program.

9. Self-Evaluation process: Current and ongoing

The Unit for Development of Quality Evaluation at the University of Haifa assisted the Department of Occupational Therapy to conduct this self-evaluation report. The entire staff participated in developing the report for the Council for Higher Education.

The Department validated their findings with surveys of various stakeholders. For example, they surveyed graduates and preceptors to obtain their views of the program. The feedback they received contributed to updating the Department's vision, mission, procedures and curriculum.

The Department's findings are consistent with our independent review, and their future plans are consistent with our recommendations (see below).

STRENGTHS

The Department involved many stakeholders in their self-evaluation process.

The Department made substantial changes based on their reflections from feedback, to improve their programs and processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Mission, goals

- 1.1. There are some infrastructure factors that put an undue burden on senior faculty to continue to accomplish their missions of teaching and research. We recommend that the appropriate decision making bodies in the government and university consider alternative methods of supporting the growth and evolution of the Department of Occupational Therapy.

2. Study programs

- 2.1. We recommend restructuring the Master's (thesis option) so that it becomes part of the PhD program. Students with an interest in research should be recruited into the PhD program with the understanding that they will complete a Master's thesis as part of their PhD studies. We recommend that the Department award more credits for the thesis work, and reduce the course credit requirements.
- 2.2. We recommend restructuring the Master's (non-thesis option) so that it becomes a clear option for those who wish to advance in practice and leadership. This track would involve more clinical courses and clinical experiences, as recommended by focus groups of graduate students. This type of coursework would clearly distinguish this option from the MSc/PhD option.

3. Organization

- 3.1. We recommend that the promotion and tenure (P&T) committee establish clear and strict timelines to ensure timely decision making so that the process is completed in less than a year.

4. Teaching and learning

- 4.1. We recommend that the faculty systematically increase their emphasis on the PhD program, aligning new students with research themes of the department. To increase efficiency of mentoring, we recommend that BA projects, MSc theses and PhD dissertations align with faculty's research themes.
- 4.2. We recommend that the Department establish a post-doctoral program.
- 4.3. The department has strong international connections for their work currently. We recommend that the Department enhance their international connections as a method for strengthening their department through collaborative research and use of educational technology for meetings and teaching.
- 4.4. We recommend that the University maintain a formal relationship with the Technion to ensure that the Technion is meeting the teaching needs of the Department. The connection between the health profession of occupational therapy and the medical school is an important one; this link makes collaborations in teaching and research possible. Further, we recommend that the

University establish an oversight process to ensure that Technion is meeting the Department of Occupational Therapy's teaching needs.

- 4.5. The Technion and the Department of Occupational Therapy need to set a formally scheduled meeting each year to review student teaching feedback and plan for changes based on the students' experiences for the next year, including setting their expertise within an occupational therapy framework for the students.
- 4.6. We recommend that the faculty establish a regular process for getting feedback from the clinical preceptors to identify strengths and areas for future development for the BA program as practice evolves.
- 4.7. We recommend that the faculty members regularly review the students' experiences in their programs so they can make appropriate adjustments to the courses of study. For example, students indicated that part of Year 2 is very intense, and had ideas for spreading the learning to other parts of the program. We recommend that the cohorts meet together with faculty so students can benefit from the overall curricular discussions.
- 4.8. We recommend that the Department organize mentoring of year 1 students by year 3 and 4 students to make links between basic science and medical knowledge and the application to occupational therapy practice. This provides a context for early learning for year 1 students and a teaching/ mentoring opportunity for the year 3 and 4 students.
- 4.9. We recommend that the faculty members work with the adjunct faculty to establish a formal process for mentoring new clinical adjunct teachers. The adjunct faculty feels very included and involved in the overall curriculum development and updates, but they feel they could benefit from specific support for the procedures of teaching and grading.
- 4.10. We recommend that the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy meet annually with the adjunct faculty to review teaching evaluations and offer guidance for future teaching.
- 4.11. We recommend that the Department work with the University to establish a formal mentoring program for faculty members as they are developing their research programs. We acknowledge that faculty members in other departments may have expertise to support the occupational therapy faculty and vice versa. This could also occur at the beginning of additional interdisciplinary teaching and research collaborations.

5. Students

- 5.1. Dropout rate is greater than expected (in the BA program ranges between 6%-19% and in the MSc with thesis between 7%-30%). We recommend that the Department examine the admission and support processes so they can develop strategies to decrease the dropout rate for both programs.
- 5.2. Infrastructure support for the PhD students, including funding and space, is not adequate. We recommend that the University provide more funding and office space for PhD students.

6. Human resources

- 6.1. We recommend that the University provide additional faculty positions to alleviate the teaching load of Senior Faculty. In addition to teaching 6-8 credits per term, they also supervise many graduate students, conduct major research programs, and provide administrative leadership within the department. Even when they add these additional responsibilities, their teaching loads remain excessive. We recommend that the University restructure the 'Teaching load' mechanism to allow a senior faculty member's teaching to be partially covered when they supervise many graduate students, have administrative leadership positions, and lead major research programs.
- 6.2. We see several possibilities for supporting reduced teaching loads of senior faculty:
 - 6.2.1 The University could create another faculty category for full time faculty who wish to have a Teaching focus.
 - 6.2.2 The Department [with funding support] could hire additional tenure track faculty.
 - 6.2.3 The Department could create [with funding support] additional adjunct faculty positions with a primary teaching focus.
- 6.3. There is a lack of qualified high caliber academic occupational therapists to fill tenure track positions in Israel. Students may complete their PhD in Israel, but currently it appears that the Rector requires potential applicants for academic positions to have doctoral or postdoctoral training out of the country. To enhance the likelihood of attracting high quality applicants to Haifa University, we recommend the following potential solutions:
 - 6.3.1 Support strong potential applicants to do postdoctoral training in a different university and/ or a different department in Israel from the one they completed their doctoral work, [because each university and /or department is a different experience, and Israel has many strong researchers that can serve as mentors] or
 - 6.3.2 Provide postdoctoral funding for highly qualified potential candidates, with the clear commitment to join the Haifa faculty upon completion of their international training (or reimburse funding).
- 6.4. The senior faculty members in the Department of Occupational Therapy are highly successful and have good insight about the required profile for productive researchers. We recommend that the Rector demonstrate confidence in the department's careful selection of potential applicants for Senior Academic positions by supporting some emerging talent for faculty positions.
- 6.5. We recommend that the University revise the promotion/ tenure process to acknowledge the factors that are relevant to occupational therapy faculty. First, competitive grant funding is difficult to obtain with funding agency emphasis on biomedical research. Secondly, grant amounts for occupational therapy research may not compare to biomedical grant amounts,

even though they are prestigious within this discipline. Third, with a biomedical research emphasis, reviewers are not likely to understand the research designs and impact on occupational therapy discipline. Fourth, research in occupational therapy is most appropriately published in occupational therapy or rehabilitation journals, whose impact factors are not equivalent to those in the biomedical arena. The manuscripts are nonetheless highly relevant and have a clinical impact in advancing the field, and therefore need to be recognized as significant research and scholarly contributions.

7. Research

- 7.1. We recommend the Department establish a formal mentoring program focused on early career tenure-track faculty. The program could involve senior faculty from both within and outside the Department. The mentoring program needs to be designed to help tenure-track faculty define their career goals; provide advice regarding promotion and tenure, and assist faculty in their scientific development.
- 7.2. We recommend continuing to explore and develop funding sources (scholarships and stipends) to support full-time PhD students (e.g., Scholarships for Excellence in Studies for Research Students, Section 3.4.9, p.76); and to create research assistant positions for full-time graduate students. The Department's research productivity is excellent, but could be improved with the addition of a cohort of full-time PhD students. Most of the current PhD students are working in practice to support themselves while doing their doctoral work.
- 7.3. We recommend the Department examine strategies to recruit post-doctoral fellows. The addition of post-doctoral fellows, in combination with the new PhD program, will substantially enhance the Department's research infrastructure and scientific environment.
- 7.4. The Department has developed productive research collaborations with faculty across the University and at other institutions. We recommend the Department consider enhancing the opportunities for interdisciplinary scientific collaboration by expanding the PhD program to include persons with academic backgrounds outside of occupational therapy and also pursue funding to establish an interdisciplinary center or institute within the Faculty with a focus on rehabilitation scholarship.

8. Infrastructure

- 8.1. Office space for faculty is limited; the need for multiple individuals to share offices decreases work efficiency and undermines confidentiality. We recommend more small meeting rooms be made available for confidential meetings.
- 8.2. There is a lack of space for graduate students; we recommend providing some workspace for them.
- 8.3. The researchers within the Department are currently sharing space; we recommend the university provide additional space for research programs, particularly as they hire new research faculty.

8.4. Classrooms are currently located all over the campus. Although sometimes this can foster integration of students, this situation is problematic when students and/ or faculty must transition from the large group teaching, to small group or practical lab-based teaching within a short time. The Department needs small rooms with flexible furnishings for various types of small group teaching (e.g., group discussion, practicing assessments or interventions). Lack of adequate practical lab space prevents the use of specialized equipment. We recommend that consideration be given to building a separate building for the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, particularly if these types of space challenges exist for the other Departments within the Faculty. This would greatly facilitate inter-professional education opportunities.

9. Self-Evaluation process

9.1. We recommend that the Department create an ongoing and systematic process for reviewing their programs as they have done for this review process.

Signed by:



Prof. Winnie Dunn



Prof. Tal Jarus



Prof. Annette Majnemer



Prof. Kenneth J. Ottenbacher

Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment



שר החינוך
Minister of Education
وزير التربية والتعليم

November, 2011

Prof. Winnie Dunn
Department of Occupational Therapy Education
University of Kansas Medical Center
USA

Dear Professor Dunn,

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 21st 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 Occupational Therapy Studies.

The composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Winnie Dunn (Chair), Prof. Tal Jarus, Prof. Annette Majnemer and Prof. Kenneth J. Ottenbacher.

Ms. Alisa Elon 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 Saar
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. Alisa Elon, Committee Coordinator

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Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule

Time	Subject	Participants	Room / Location
10:00-10:30	Opening session with the heads of the institution and the senior staff member appointed to deal with quality assessment	<p>Prof. David Faraggi, Rector</p> <p>Prof. Perla Werner, Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. Shai Linn, Dean of the Faculty Social Welfare and Health Sciences</p> <p>Ms. Ruchama Elad-Yarum, Manager, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector</p> <p>Ms. Michal Daloya, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector</p>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
10:30-11:00	Meeting with the heads of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences	Prof. Shai Linn , Dean of the Faculty Social Welfare and Health Sciences	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
11:11-00:30	Meeting with the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy	Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger , Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
11:30-12:30	Meeting with senior academic faculty and with representatives of relevant departmental committees (teaching/curriculum committee, admissions committee, appointment committee)*	<p>Dr. Eynat Gal</p> <p>Ms. Liat Hen (Head of the BA Program, Head of the BA Admission Committee, Manager of the Clinical Affiliation Unit)</p> <p>Prof. Naomi Josman (Head of the PhD Program, Head of the MA program, Head of the Orthodox Bney Brak Program)</p> <p>Dr. Racheli Kizony</p> <p>Dr. Tzameret Ricon</p> <p>Dr. Eleanor Schneider</p> <p>Dr. Naomi Schreuer</p> <p>Prof. Tamar Weiss</p>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712

Time	Subject	Participants	Room / Location
12:30-13:15	Meeting with junior faculty*	<p>Ms. Yael Fogel, PhD Student</p> <p>Ms. Yael Froim, Teaching Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Neta Katz, Research Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Khawla Lubani, Teaching Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Sonya Meyer, Teaching Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Alexandra Saad, PhD Student</p> <p>Mr. Daniel Shteckelmacher, Research Assistant</p> <p>Ms. Keren Tzitiad, Research Assistant</p>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
13:15-14:15	Closed working meeting & Lunch (light lunch in meeting room)		Main Building, Restaurants Plaza, Staff dining room
14:15-14:40	Library Tour	<p>Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger, Head of the OT Department</p> <p>Cecilia Harel, Library staff - Head of Foreign Acquisitions & Collection Development, Gifts & Exchange and</p> <p>Avigail Shkolnik, Periodicals Librarian and Liaison Librarian to the Dept. of Occupational Therapy will accompany</p>	Library
14:45-15:00	The Laboratory for the Study of Complex Human Activity and Participation (CHAP laboratory)	<p>Prof. Sara Rosenblum (is in sabbatical), hence Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger and Ms. Sonya Meir (Teaching assistant) will represent the laboratory.</p>	CHAP Laboratory Eshkol Tower, 2 nd floor
15:00-15:15	The Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology (LIRT laboratory)	Prof. Tamar will accompany	LIRT Laboratory Eshkol Tower 9 th floor

Time	Subject	Participants	Room / Location
15:15-16:00	Meeting with adjunct lecturers*	<p>Dr.Thia Eshet</p> <p>Dr. Yafit Gilboa</p> <p>Ms. Orit Palmon</p> <p>Ms. Ruth Shoham</p> <p>Ms. Michal Weismann</p> <p>Ms. Sandra Zukerman</p>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
16:00-16:45	Meeting with clinical preceptors*	<p>Mr. Hassan Abu-Nimer, OT physical services , Calalit Health Services, Shfaram</p> <p>Ms. Natali Azrael- Turgeman, Maccabi Health services , Haifa</p> <p>Ms. Neta Erez, Children Rehabilitation Field, Tel-Hashomer Hospital,</p> <p>Ms. Tamar Har-Even, Mizra Psychiatric Hospital</p> <p>Ms. Sausan Haviv- Mazawi, OT services Manager, Interdisciplinary Clinical Center, University Of Haifa</p> <p>Ms. Dorit Itach, OT Services Manager, Nahariya Hospital</p> <p>Ms. Svetlana Rabinovitch, OT Services, Hamaginim institute, Hadar, Haifa</p> <p>Ms. Rinat Shalom, OT services Manager, Cochav Center - A Supportive Environment for Mentally Challenged Persons, Ma'alot.</p> <p>Ms. Nasrin Zaid, Student's Psychiatric Affiliation Supervisor, Lev Hashron Hospital, Pardesiya</p>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712

Monday, June 18, 2012:

Time	Subject	Participants	Room / Location
08:45- 09:40	Tour of clinical sites	<p>Mr. Kareem Nasser, School Principle, The Secret Heart School</p> <p>Will accompany:</p> <p>Ms. Liat Hen, Manager of the Clinical Affiliation Unit, OT Department University of Haifa Ms. Yael Fogel, Fieldwork Coordinator, University of Haifa Ms. Ruth Shoham, Fieldwork Coordinator, University of Haifa</p>	The Secret Heart School
09:40-09:55	Tour of clinical sites- 15 Min Drive to Rambam Hospital		
10:00-11:30	Tour of clinical sites	<p>Ms. Margalit Samuel,</p> <p>OT services Manager, Rambam, Hospital</p> <p>Will accompany:</p> <p>Ms. Liat Hen, Manager of the Clinical Affiliation Unit, OT Department, University of Haifa Ms. Yael Fogel, Fieldwork Coordinator, OT Department, University of Haifa Ms. Ruth Shoham, fieldwork coordinator, OT department, University of Haifa</p>	<p>Psychiatric Division</p> <p>OT Physical Rehabilitation Unit- Rambam Hospital</p>
12:00-13:00	Closed working meeting & Lunch (light lunch in meeting room)		<p>Main Building, Restaurants Plaza,</p> <p>Staff dining room</p>
13:13-00:35	Meeting with undergraduate students		Eshkol Tower, Room 712

Time	Subject	Participants	Room / Location
13:35-14:10	Meeting with master's students	<u>MA with Thesis</u> <u>MA without Thesis</u>	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
14:10-14:45	Meeting with PhD students		Eshkol Tower, Room 712
14:45-15:15	Summery meeting with the Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy	Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger , Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy	Eshkol Tower, Room 712
15:15-16:00	Closed-door meeting of the committee		Eshkol Tower, Room 712
16:00-16:30	Summation meeting with heads of department and institution	Prof. David Faraggi , Rector Prof. Perla Werner , Vice Rector Prof. Shai Linn , Dean of the Faculty Social Welfare and Health Sciences Dr. Batya Engel-Yeger , Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy Ms. Ruchama Elad-Yarum , Manager, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector Ms. Michal Daloya , Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector	Eshkol Tower, Room 712