



**Committee for the Evaluation of Sociology and Anthropology Study Programs**

**Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

**Department of Sociology and Anthropology**

**Evaluation Report**

**August 2012**

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## **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 Sociology and Anthropology.

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. Seymour Spilerman – Department of Sociology, Columbia University, USA, Committee Chair
- Prof. Arne Kalleberg - Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina, USA
- Prof. Herbert Lewis - Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin, USA
- Prof. Leslie McCall - Department of Sociology, Northwestern University, USA\*
- Prof. Yitzhak Samuel - Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Haifa, Israel
- Prof. Moshe Shokeid - Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Tel Aviv University, Israel
- Prof. Florencia Torche - Department of Sociology, NYU, USA†.

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

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to‡:

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Civil Engineering, 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).

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\* Prof. Leslie McCall did not take part in the evaluation of OUI, TAU, BIU and AUC

† Prof. Florencia Torche joined the committee at a later stage, after the first round of visits in January 2012, thus did not take part in the evaluation of BGU, HUJI, Academic College Emek Yezreel and University of Haifa

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

## **Chapter 2-Committee Procedures**

The Committee held its first meetings on January 02, 2012 during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as Sociology and Anthropology Study programs.

In January 2012, the Committee held its first cycle of evaluation, and visited Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, University of Haifa, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and The Academic College of Emek Yezreel. In May 2012 the Committee conducted its second evaluation cycle, and visited The Open University, Tel Aviv University, Bar Ilan University and Ariel University Center of Samaria. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students, and toured the visited departments.

This report deals with the **Department of Sociology and Anthropology at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.**

The Committee's visit to The Hebrew University of Jerusalem took place on January 09<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

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

The Committee thanks the management of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the Committee during its visit at the institution.

### **Chapter 3: Evaluation of Sociology and Anthropology Studies Program at The Hebrew University of 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.*

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem opened its Mt. Scopus campus in 1925 and was accredited as an institution of higher education by the Council for Higher Education in 1962. As the first research university in Israel, the Hebrew University's mission is to develop cutting-edge research and to educate the next generations of leading scientists and scholars in all fields of learning. The Hebrew University is part of an international scientific and scholarly network, measuring its performance by international standards in comparison to the best universities in the world. At the same time, the study of Jewish culture and heritage represent a core objective of the university, as indicated by both its history and its name.

A Social Sciences Department was initially formed as part of the Faculty of Humanities, with an independent Faculty of Social Sciences established in 1968. The Mt. Scopus campus is now home to the Faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences, and various professional schools, with the Faculty of Social Sciences comprising eight departments: Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology, Geography, Communications and Journalism, Statistics, Economics, Political Science, and International Relations. In addition, there are a variety of cross-disciplinary study programs and research centers that foster a vibrant interdisciplinary environment.

At the same time, the university must cope with a context of reduced financial support by the government, growing competition from the new colleges, and a location in Jerusalem, which is seen by many students and faculty as an unattractive social environment. To different degrees each of these factors has contributed to changes in the distribution of students across the undergraduate and graduate levels, and to the growth and decline of enrollments in different departments.

#### **MISSION AND GOALS**

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology (DSA) of the Hebrew University has a venerable and indeed historic tradition in the State of Israel. It was the first such department in the country and some of its early faculty, especially Martin Buber, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Yaakov Katz, Yonina Talmon and Yossie Ben David, were scholars of international renown. Moreover, some five prior members of the department have been recipients of the coveted Israel Prize. Under the leadership of Eisenstadt, the sociologists

situated their local studies of social planning in Israel within a comparative framework, thereby engaging an international community of scholars. The anthropologists in the department made equally visible marks in their field, with studies of Israeli society as well as of cultures distant from this country. Both the sociologists and anthropologists were successful in conveying the complexities of building a new country, with unique institutions such as the kibbutz, to scholars outside of Israel and, accordingly, attained a global reputation for the department. They set a high benchmark for future generations to emulate.

If the subsequent generation of sociologists and anthropologists in the department--who are now themselves approaching retirement--did not quite have the prominence of the founding cohort, they were (and are) an impressive and productive group. The problem that the department now faces is one of maintaining its excellence and intellectual vigor at a time of transition to a younger set of scholars. And this it must be accomplished at a challenging time for the university, for the reasons noted earlier. Enrollments in the department at the BA and MA levels have declined, faculty lines have been reduced in number, and funding for graduate students has been cut steeply. It is imperative that the department rebuild its research and teaching capacity, and in the process decide how best to configure itself: which fields to develop and strengthen and which to forgo.

The Committee is aware that this rebuilding will have to take place within the severe budgetary constraints faced by the university. Thus, the administration of the Hebrew University will have to decide whether or not they wish to reconstitute the DSA as a department with high international regard. Given its distinguished tradition, and its location in a great university, it is the Committee's view that the DSA can again achieve a distinguished status, but this will require new faculty lines and sustained funding from the administration, along with a well thought out plan by the department for its future to justify the investment.

## **THE STUDY PROGRAM**

### **Undergraduate Program**

The department offers a single major and a double major program, with the second major usually in another social science department. Recently, a "fast track to MA" program has been instituted, to which second and third year students can apply and which culminates in the receipt of a BA and MA in four years. The students indicated considerable satisfaction with the fast track program. The curriculum appears to provide an attractive array of required courses, in both theory and in methods, though there are few electives.

The number of BA students in the department has declined in recent years, from 585 in 2007 to 400 in 2011, and seems to have stabilized at the lower number. The decline in BA enrollment can be attributed to several factors: the growth of colleges; the greater emphasis by students on practical or professional fields of study which provide better job

opportunities; the difficulties associated with living in Jerusalem; and budget cuts to the department, which have resulted in fewer courses and less scholarship support.

The impact of the colleges on BA enrollments in sociology/anthropology departments has been noted in other universities, as well. In the past, many students enrolled in sociology/anthropology because they could not secure entrance to the departments of economics or psychology, their preferred choices because of the strong linkage of these disciplines to work careers. However, with the advent of the colleges, which have lower entrance requirements than the universities, these students now have a choice: study economics or psychology at a college or enroll in sociology/anthropology at a university. Clearly, many make the first choice.

The loss of students to the colleges is not an entirely negative outcome for the DSA, as it lessens the heterogeneity among students in career aspirations, permitting the department to formulate a more rigorously academic curriculum at the BA level and concentrate a greater portion of its resources on the graduate program. However, to the extent that the enrollment decline is attributable to some of the other factors noted above, especially to the reduction in funding, this is a serious matter. The recent introduction of the fast track program to the MA will help; reductions in class size--a concern raised by students--would also contribute to making the department a more attractive learning environment.

Several undergraduate students voiced concern about the level of quantitative training in the department. Moreover, they felt that they had little opportunity to apply what had been learned, either in substantive courses or in research projects. The Committee urges the department to integrate quantitative materials more widely into the curriculum. We recommend that capable advanced undergraduates be admitted into the quantitative MA courses. Also, the department should consider offering a research seminar in which students could design research projects involving the analysis of a data set. The Hebrew University has an excellent data depository library and students should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with this facility.

## **Graduate Programs**

Enrollment in the MA program also shows a contraction, from 122 in 2007 to 91 in 2011. This decrease is more consequential for the department than the fall-off at the BA level because it departs from the trend at other Israeli universities and may indicate a decline in the attractiveness of the DSA at the Hebrew University, relative to other Israeli universities. The Committee is of the opinion that this enrollment decline is largely a result of reduced financial support for MA students and the reduction in faculty size, which translates into fewer elective courses and less time for faculty to work individually with students or supervise their theses.

There are four tracks in the MA program: Sociology; Anthropology; Organization Studies; and Demography. Also, the department actively participates in Cultural Studies, a recently added program in the Faculty of Social Sciences. We can estimate the relative enrollments

in the MA programs from data on recent graduates: for 2010-11, the figures were 16 in Anthropology, 27 in Organizational Studies, 13 in Sociology, and 4 in Demography.

The Anthropology track, once the premier anthropology program in the country, has been severely compromised. Once commanding 10 faculty members (including some not formally trained as anthropologists but working in the anthropology tradition), it has now declined to four, though it is the second largest of the MA programs in terms of enrollment. The faculty size is far too small to support graduate study in anthropology and the program has suffered accordingly, with a great reduction in available courses. This program must be rebuilt.

The Demography track is the smallest of the MA programs, with insufficient enrollment to support specialized courses. While the Committee considers the assimilation of the demographers into the department to have been a success, and while the new faculty bring to the department much needed strength in quantitative methods, the very modest interest in this program by students is a cause for concern. However, since no other Israeli university teaches formal demography, and since there is a clear need for demographers in the country--by the Central Bureau of Statistics, among other employers--we believe it is vital that the demography track remain a program track in the department.

This program should, however, be broadened in course offerings to make it more attractive to students. In particular, we recommend that demographic study be better integrated with traditional sociological materials that benefit from a quantitative approach, such as the fields of stratification and organizational analysis. Another approach to increasing enrollment would be to open recruitment to the graduate program to students who have a BA in another discipline; with respect to demography this would pertain to students with a BA in economics or statistics, though a more general argument can be made for admitting students from other social science departments into graduate study. Sociology and anthropology are not very cumulative disciplines, and even without undergraduate coursework in these fields it is not evident that committed new entrants to the DSA are at a disadvantage relative to students with a BA in the core fields. In the home departments of many members of this Committee, little attention is given to an applicant's BA major in admission decisions to the graduate program, nor is remedial coursework required of these entrants. We recognize that the tradition in Israel is different, but we are not sure it is to the benefit of the DSA to require undergraduate coursework in sociology or anthropology.

The specialization in Organization Studies is the most popular of the MA programs and responds to a demand in Israel for advanced education of a practical nature. It is a well-regarded program and attracts excellent applicants. Most of the students in this program are in the non-thesis track. The DSA has enriched training in this track, adding opportunities for students to get field experience, such as through a practicum that enables them to work in a variety of organizational settings. The DSA has also taken steps to integrate this applied track with the rest of the program, such as by offering a course for non-thesis-track students that combines theory and practice, and requiring research papers of them. However, there may be some costs to this integration: a number of students with whom we met were concerned that mixing academically-oriented and

applied students in required courses led to the courses being very full and containing students with different motivations. The Committee does not have a recommendation on this matter; moving to separate classes for thesis and non-thesis students would reduce heterogeneity in student goals and perceived needs, and permit each course to be better focused. At the same time, there is much value in exposing the practical-oriented students to rigorous academic materials, and in acquainting the academic-oriented students with the practicalities of work in organizational settings.

On another matter the Committee is in agreement: The Organization Studies program is too oriented to qualitative approaches and would benefit from the introduction of more quantitative methods. Much of the work that organizational consultants are called upon to undertake involves the analysis of personnel data, promotion regimes, and the like. Similarly, much research in academic settings on organizations combines themes in stratification with organizational analysis. Thus, a deep familiarity with quantitative methods would be of great value for both thesis and non-thesis track students.

Aside from a consideration of the specifics of the MA programs, the Committee felt that quantitative study at the MA level should be upgraded. The most advanced course in statistics for MA students covers logistic regression, but it appears that there is little opportunity for students to learn moderately advanced topics, such as fixed and random effects or regression discontinuity designs, which are routinely covered in the better sociology departments outside of Israel. Moreover, the current statistics courses tend to be too applied, giving students an ability to read journal articles and use statistical packages, but not a deeper understanding of the methods. We therefore recommend that these course offerings be upgraded.

Also, an efficient way in which to introduce graduate students to new methodological procedures is to invite specialists from other universities to present a short course, of a few days duration, on a specific technique. To bolster its methodological training, we recommend that the department consider offering two or three intensive training short courses each year.

The Committee is concerned about the meager funding for MA students. While teaching assistantships are offered and these include half-tuition coverage, too few positions are available to support the MA program. There were also complaints about the workload required of TAs, which suggests that a greater allotment of TA positions would contribute to more effective teaching of BA students as well as providing support for MA students. Finally, a greater availability of TA-ships would enhance the recruiting power of the department in competing for the best graduate students.

The number of Ph.D. students has also declined from 58 in 2007 to 40 in 2011. Funding, again, was a major concern for the students with whom the Committee met. There are few fellowships to cover tuition and maintenance, and the competition for these is fierce. Apparently, only 6-8 PhD students per year in the entire Faculty of Social Sciences receive fellowships for four years of study; from these, the DSA receives about 1-2 per year. Exacerbating the problem, we were told that PhD students are no longer hired as TAs

because they are too expensive due to negotiated collective bargaining contracts. As a consequence, most of the doctoral students work full-time or nearly full-time, and this lengthens the time to completion of the degree.

Several PhD students expressed a desire for a more structured program with seminars that would foster cohort-building. There is little coursework specifically for the PhD. The department does help students design individual programs relevant to dissertation topics but the coursework is drawn from MA courses, which are often basic. In addition, the PhD students expressed a desire for a professional development class (instruction on grant preparation and the writing of research papers). The Committee supports the development of courses for the PhD program, but this will probably have to await the recruitment of additional faculty. In the interim, a program of short courses, mentioned above in relation to the department's methodological needs, would also enrich the PhD program.

At all degree levels the committee was interested in the output of the DSA—the percentage of BA students who go on to graduate study, the percentage of MA students who continue to PhD study, and the kinds of employment secured by graduates of the different degree levels and from the different MA tracks. However, little systematic data were available on graduates from the program. Information of this sort would be useful to the department in assessing its performance and the needs of its students, and we recommend that such data be collected in the future.

## **FACULTY AND TEACHING**

The department consists of 23 faculty members--12 sociologists, 4 anthropologists, 4 organization specialists, and 3 demographers (2010 figures). This represents a decline of three faculty from the 2006 figure. In recent years the department has been harmed by a considerable turnover in staff; the many departures and early retirements have especially damaged the anthropology wing of the department. Anthropology at one point consisted of 10 faculty; it is now down to 4, a clearly inadequate number for a joint department and a shadow of what once was the premier anthropology program in Israel.

The Committee recommends that the anthropology group be reconstituted. If it is to again become a center of intellectual thought and research, we believe that a minimum size of 7 is required. We note that a number of sociologists in the department study and teach topics related to culture and religion, themes that overlap with the research interests of anthropologists. We view this overlap as desirable in that it provides a linkage between the two disciplines. However, the sociologists cannot substitute for rigorously trained anthropologists since the intellectual orientations and methodologies of these two disciplines are quite different. The anthropological tradition at the Hebrew University has focused on the variety of Jewish practices in Israel and in the diaspora, and the immigration experience in Israel; we believe this emphasis should continue. At the same time the anthropology group must maintain its tradition of examining cultures in distant lands, which has been central to the development of the discipline.

While some overlap in the interests of anthropologists and sociologists is desirable, the Committee takes note of the opening of a cultural studies program in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Since we expect there to be overlap between the core of this program and the interests of the qualitative sociologists in the DSA--in topics such as gender, culture, and critical studies--we feel there is no need for new additions to this area. Indeed, the department should explore the possibility of joint appointments with the new program to free up faculty lines for other pressing needs.

However, the sociologists also include faculty of considerable prominence in the field of political sociology. With the recent passing of Baruch Kimmerling and the imminent retirement of several of these faculty members, replacements should be sought, preferably before the expected retirements eviscerate this group.

An expressed desire by the faculty, which we support, concerns the recruitment of quantitative sociologists to the department. They would serve as a bridge between the demographers and the more traditional sociological fields, thereby contributing to the integration of intellectual areas in the DSA. The committee is of the view that overlapping research interests, especially when faculty bring different methodological styles to a project, enhance the quality of research and the prospects of securing funding. In particular, we recommend that the DSA recruit stratification specialists (a serious absence in the department) and at least one organizational scholar; both fields have active traditions of quantitative research in contemporary sociology.

The organization studies faculty are a diverse group and cover topics such as gender, ethnicity, and class in organizations, as well as the more traditional subject matter of this field. As we have noted, this specialty is well regarded and its students are of high caliber. We have indicated that a specialist with quantitative skills should be added, to both extend the research capabilities of this group and provide students with skills that are valued by employers.

With respect to the demography group, its merger with the DSA has enabled the department to begin to address its long-standing weakness in quantitative sociology. But serious problems remain. First, there is very low enrollment in the demography track at the MA level. A possible reason for this is that 3 demographers are too few to provide robust training in this specialty. We do not recommend that the demography faculty be enlarged. Rather, it is their contribution to other specialties in the department that should constitute its core mission. Demography is critical to understanding family formation patterns, organizational dynamics, even state politics, and the demographers in the DSA should be called upon to collaborate in joint course offerings in these fields. As noted above, a second way to better integrate the intellectual perspectives of demography with the other fields would be by recruiting stratification scholars, making use of the overlap of stratification with demography and with the other specialties in the department.

The department will require the support and assistance of the university in order to succeed in these rebuilding efforts. We recommend that the department prepare a 5 year plan for rebuilding, noting the specialties it wishes to develop and strengthen. The

Committee appreciates that the university allocates many of its open lines to candidates who are perceived to be the very best in their cohort, with little regard for discipline or specialty, but the university must recognize that this strategy makes impossible the implementation of a coherent plan for building up particular specialties within a department. The availability of quality applicants in the particular areas in which a department wishes to invest can be a rare occurrence and the administration should give weight to the fit of an applicant with the department's plan, as well as to the quality and promise of the candidate.

Finally, the department is acutely aware of its difficulty with retaining faculty recruits who must adjust to a new country and invest in mastering a difficult language. The department believes that its optimal strategy would be to encourage its best MA students to complete a PhD abroad, in the US or in Europe, and then recruit the very best of these to the department. The Committee concurs with this strategy, though the pool of potential recruits should certainly encompass students sent abroad by the other Israeli universities. An alternate source of candidates are Israeli students who complete a PhD locally but take a post-doctoral fellowship abroad. Our recommendation here is that the department not hire its own PhDs.

### **Departmental Leadership and Faculty Cohesion**

Developing and implementing a strategic plan will require consensus and leadership. There are a number of faculty who have held senior posts (two have served as deans of the Faculty of Social Sciences). Others are currently working in the university administration (e.g., Vice-Dean of the Social Science Faculty) or chair key university-wide committees. However, several of them are approaching retirement age and their successors are not evident. As a result, the department will have to bring its younger members into senior positions rather quickly and involve them in decision-making about the department's future.

Faculty cohesion and involvement in the day-to-day administration of the department is a problem. One reason is that faculty offices are small and provide little space for book collections and research materials, dissuading many from locating their research activities in the department. Exacerbating the problem is the fact that a number of faculty do not live in Jerusalem and commute instead from the Tel Aviv area, which means a tendency to work at home on days when not teaching. The result is that the department setting often feels empty and there is little opportunity for intellectual engagement or informal meetings where issues facing the collectivity can be discussed at leisure. This problem is particularly severe for new faculty, who have expressed to us a view that they feel adrift in the department, lacking advice on both career decisions and on how to maneuver within the complexities of the university.

While little can be done about the design of the offices or about the residence patterns of faculty, the department has been taking steps to address the problem of anomie. There is now a concerted effort to encourage collaborative research; one recent outcome is that

several faculty, spearheaded by Prof. Michael Shalev, joined together to analyze the inequality protest movement in Tel Aviv in the summer of 2011. To promote these efforts, seed monies were obtained from the Schein and Eshkol Centers at the University. There has also been encouragement to hold lunch meetings, to develop workshops bringing faculty to the campus, and some consideration has been given to requiring course schedules to be spread over three days. All these activities are commendable; they should promote cohesion and make the department a more hospitable work setting. We also recommend that particular attention be given to the needs of new faculty recruits. Each should be assigned a mentor who would have the responsibility of easing the acclimation to the university and advising on career issues.

## **RESEARCH**

The DSA is intensely research oriented, with its faculty employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. However, most members utilize qualitative methodologies. Quantitative research is primarily carried out by the demography faculty as well as by a few who specialize in organization studies. Thus, qualitative research (e.g., ethnographic, interpretative, critical approaches) is more typical of the work done by faculty in the DSA, and this orientation has been the tradition in the department since its beginnings. However, the Committee is of the view that quantitative approaches are growing in importance in the field of sociology and that this methodology should have a greater presence in the department.

The faculty publish their research in a variety of ways: monographs, chapters in edited books, articles in refereed journals, as well as research reports and conference presentations. As far as journal articles are concerned, they are published in solid periodicals, mainly specialized ones, but rarely in top-tier general journals. Consequently, while the research products of the department are of high quality, as judged by citations and number of publications, their impact on the profession is less than should be the case for a quality department. To some extent this is a result of the most prestigious sociology journals devoting an increasing proportion of their pages to studies that utilize cutting-edge quantitative methodologies.

Faculty members collaborate in research with their colleagues, but to a limited extent. The same is true with respect to joint research and publication with Ph.D. students. Such collaborations are common among quantitative researchers, simply because of the task requirements of this sort of work, and should increase once the department deepens its investment in this style of research.

In the past, the faculty has not been very active in pursuing external research grants. However, in the past few years the university has emphasized the importance of obtaining research grants, with faculty members urged to apply for competitive grants in Israel and abroad. The university even motivates grant applications by providing small sums to individual faculty for the submission of proposals. This encouragement appears to be working since the amounts received from grants have increased significantly. However,

the bulk of the research grants was obtained by a few faculty members, mainly senior lecturers and associate professors; it would be desirable for more senior professors to compete for external grants, utilizing their established reputations to secure monies for the department. Research funds can provide financial support for graduate students as well as bring them into the research process as research assistants.

Complaints were raised in the department about the lack of assistance from the university with the preparation of research proposals. Without addressing the specifics of the complaints, it should be evident that both the university and the department will gain from increased research funding, and the university should therefore respond to the department's concerns and facilitate the application process. Junior faculty, in particular, will need assistance with grant writing since this undertaking will be unfamiliar to most, and the research authority should make available a staff member to assist these faculty.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The layout of the department's space is attractive, with pleasant courtyards for informal meetings and a suitable seminar room. The faculty offices, however, are another matter. As noted above, they are very small, inadequate as workspaces, and a major impediment to convincing faculty to set up their work lives in the department.

The Hebrew University runs nine specialized libraries. One is dedicated to social sciences. This library is well stocked with current books in sociology and anthropology, and the staff are responsive to book orders by the faculty. There are also extensive holdings of electronic journals, which can be accessed at the university or at home by students and faculty. We found the library to be an attractive setting for students, with separate rooms for group study, quiet zones, and the like.

The university has an impressive data library, holding many of the surveys conducted over the years by the Central Bureau of Statistics. This is a valuable resource for demographers and for other quantitative researchers in the department. It should be drawn upon in course assignments and utilized in research projects.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In the past, the DSA had a reputation as a prestigious department with international recognition in both anthropology and sociology. In recent years the department has declined in prominence, though many of its current faculty are excellent scholars. The decline is due to many factors, some relating to its location in Jerusalem, the residence patterns of its faculty, and the small and inadequate faculty offices in Mt. Scopus. But more significant is the high faculty turnover in the department, a result of retirements and other departures, which have disrupted the coherence of the department as a teaching and research operation. Our recommendations are intended primarily to address these latter matters.

1. The anthropology faculty should be rebuilt to again become a major teaching and research group. For effective training and to sponsor a robust research program, the Committee believes that it should have a minimum of 7 faculty members. Specific specialties to consider are linguistic anthropology, ethnography of Israeli communities, and ethnographic studies of cultures distant from Israel. This should be accomplished within 3 years.
2. Sociology is becoming an increasingly quantitative discipline and the DSA must build strength in this area to supplement its contingent of demographers. We recommend that the department make at least 2 appointments of quantitative sociologists, with particular consideration given to the fields of stratification and organizational analysis. This should be done within 3 years.
3. The department should prepare a plan detailing its approach to achieving future excellence, which incorporates the preceding items but also makes clear its strategy for addressing other problems, such as the need for greater integration among the four graduate program areas, the need to develop new senior faculty who are prepared to assume leadership roles, and the need to increase the presence of faculty in the departmental offices. The university, in turn, upon receiving an acceptable template of the department's vision, should make available funds for the recruitment of the appropriate personnel and for addressing other pressing department needs. The development of a plan should be done within a year.
4. A particular need is for additional teaching assistantship positions so that more graduate students have the resources to concentrate on their studies without outside employment. The Committee is acutely aware of the financial constraints that the university has faced, but investments of this sort are required if the DSA is to be revitalized and return to being a vibrant center of training and research in Israel.
5. We recommend that the department institute a mentorship program for its junior faculty (lecturer appointments). A senior faculty member should be made available to each new hire to provide assistance with both academic matters and bureaucratic procedures at the university. This should be instituted within the next year.
6. The department should institute a program for routinely collecting information on its alumni so it can better understand the effectiveness of its training program and whether it is meeting the needs of the students. This should be accomplished within the next year.

**Signed by:**



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Prof. Seymour Spilerman,  
Chair



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Prof. Arne Kalleberg



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Prof. Herbert Lewis



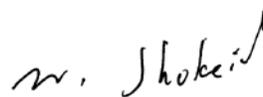
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Prof. Leslie McCall



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Prof. Yitzhak Samuel



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Prof. Moshe Shokeid

## Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment -



February, 2012

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

Prof. Seymour Spilerman  
Department of Sociology  
Columbia University  
USA

Dear Professor Spilerman,

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 Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of Sociology - Anthropology Studies.

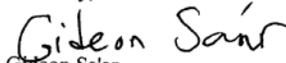
The composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Seymour Spilerman (Chair), Prof. Arne Kalleberg, Prof. Herbert Lewis, Prof. Leslie McCall, Prof. Yitzhak Samuel Prof. Moshe Shokeid and Prof. Florencia Torche.

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

In your capacity as 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

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כתובת אתר ממשל זמין: <http://gov.il>

כתובת אתר המשרד: <http://www.education.gov.il>

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**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

**Sociology & Anthropology - Schedule of site visit -  
Hebrew University**

**Monday, January 09, 2012**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>
09:00-09:30	Opening session with the heads of the institution and the senior staff member appointed to deal with quality assessment	Prof. Sara Stroumsa – Rector Prof. Yaacov Schul – Vice Rector
09:30-10:15	Meeting with head of Faculty of Social Sciences	Prof. Avner De-Shalit
10:15-11:00	Meeting with current & past academic heads of the Department of Sociology & Anthropology	Prof. Guy Stecklov, Prof. Amalya Oliver, Prof. Gad Yair
11:00-11:45	Meeting with senior academic staff representing departmental sub-disciplines*	Prof. Nachman Ben-Yehuda, Prof. Eva Illouz, Prof. Boas Shamir, Prof. Michael Shalev, Prof. Barbara Okun, Prof. Tamar El-Or
11:45-12:30	Meeting with senior academic staff representing teaching & funding sub-committees*	Dr. Nurit Stadler, Dr. Michal Frenkel, Prof. Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, Prof. Gili Drori
12:30-13:15	Meeting with junior academic staff*	Dr. Josh Guetzkow, Dr. Nabil Khattab, Dr. Sigal Goidin, Dr. Eitan Wilf
13:15-14:15	Lunch (in the same room)	Closed-door meeting of the committee
14:15-14:45	Meeting with B.A students**	
14:45-15:15	Meeting with M.A students**	
15:15-15:45	Meeting with PhD students**	

15:45-16:15	Meeting with Alumni**	Ms. Bat Sheva Haas, Mr. Shai Ben-Ami, Mr. Muhammed Kandil, Ms. Noga Buber, Mr. Guy Shalev, Ms. Yemima Cohen, Ms. Keren Shoshana
16:15-16:30	Coffee Break	
16:30-17:30	Closed-door meeting of the committee	
17:30-18:00	Summation meeting with the Head of department	Prof. Guy Stecklov
18:00-18:30	Summation meeting with heads of institution	Prof. Sara Stroumsa – Rector Prof. Yaacov Schul – Vice Rector

\* 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.