

Response to CHE Report: Netanya Academic College 2

Please find enclosed, as you requested on Feb. 13, 2014, the response of Netanya Academic College to the CHE Report: Netanya Academic College 2.

We take this opportunity to thank the CHE Committee for its insights and guidance. We hope that our reply will alleviate the Committee's concern that NAC seeks to preserve the existing situation rather than taking on the challenges of the future.

FACULTY

Netanya Academic College (NAC) is pleased that the CHE Committee commends NAC for the excellent efforts and considerable progress in answering questions raised by the CHE in its report. We are also pleased that the Committee notes that the three most recent hires are up to date active researchers in the behavioral sciences. These new future looking hires now make up about 25% of the current permanent full time faculty in Behavioral Sciences.

We plan to continue this hiring policy, but we do feel that the older faculty members still have much to offer by virtue of their cumulated experience, and certainly, the CHE committee does not expect us to dismissed tenured faculty at this time.

CURRICULUM

NAC is pleased that the CHE Committee commends NAC for the breadth of courses spanning the behavioral sciences, and in particular for the statistic courses, for requiring students to participate in research, for incorporating articles in English readings in the syllabi, for establishing an honors program, and for offering courses in economics as well as psychology, sociology, business and anthropology.

Students who wish to expand the breadth of their education are encouraged to take additional courses outside of their major.

In our opinion, frequent examinations are not the only way to benefit students with regard to determining final grades. In addition to the final exam, many courses require a demanding series of written reports of varying breadth as well as guided exercises related to the subject matter. We view these more dynamic and interactive experiences as pedagogically sound and effective as are more exams.

A team teaching course, following the CHE Committee's recommendations, has been developed over the last year and will be offered starting next year. The course is an interdisciplinary course which will deal with the relationship between finding meaning in life during old age and maintaining cognitive abilities. This course integrates both gerontology and cognitive psychology, and will be team taught by Drs. Kaplan and Erel. Expansion of the team teaching program will depend on its success. A syllabus of this course is attached.

In the spirit of the CHE Committee's recommendation concerning internships, a course is being developed for academic year 2014-15 in the field of gerontology. Students will be assigned to relevant organizations in Netanya with the cooperation of the unit of elderly care in the local municipality. Students will be required to devote four hours a week along with mentoring sessions with social workers who will guide the students in their work. A final report will be submitted by the students at the end of the semester.

Netanya Academic College

School of Behavior Sciences

Elective Course and (Anthropology & Psychology) Interdisciplinary Seminar

utilizing the Team Teaching Method

Subject: The affinity between finding meaning in old age and the preservation of cognitive faculties

Dr. Aviva Kaplan and Dr. Hadas Erel

a. Course objectives and structure

During their third year of studies, the students will become acquainted with mutually complementary psychological and anthropological interdisciplinary content. The course content is based on skills that the students have acquired during previous years in anthropology and cognitive psychology.

The main subject of the course examines the importance of meaning in the life of the aging individual in a reality in which life expectancy is constantly increasing. At the same time, man's cognitive activities and their importance to his continued existence are examined.

During the first semester, theoretical and empirical content in anthropology and psychology will be learned, and the second semester will deal with practical experience of in-depth interviews in the narrative method as well as running structured software of cognitive paradigms in the field of qualitative psychological research.

The second semester will be conducted according to the Team Teaching method. The students will receive group and individual coaching from the two lecturers. They will be required to apply the research methods learned during the first semester. They will conduct in-depth personal interviews using the narrative method, which will be deciphered by means of the theoretical tools learned during the first semester. In addition, they will run structured software of cognitive paradigms, by means of which they will gather qualitative details related to cognitive abilities.

To summarize the **research experience**, the student will be requested to **write a combined paper**, which explains the findings obtained by the two research methods that were used. The uniqueness of this learning method is that the student is given an opportunity to experience different research methods in the field of Behavior Sciences.

By using them, separately and together, the student is expected to decipher a wide, general social phenomenon.

b. Participation principles

- 1) Prerequisite for participation in the seminar – participation in the interdisciplinary elective course
- 2) Mandatory attendance in all class lessons during the first semester
- 3) The final seminar grade will reflect the student’s achievements based on his/her participation in the elective course (Semester 1). The seminar grade is also the course grade.
- 4) Following successful completion of the seminar, the student receives credits for both the elective course and the seminar.

c. Study topics

Lesson #	Topic	References
1	General review of the Team Teaching Method	Dr. Aviva Kaplan and Dr. Hadas Erel
2	Old age in a post-modern reality and its implications to human life	Hazan, H. (2010). “Anthropologist on Mars: An invitation to the dead end of aging research”, <i>Gerontology</i> , 39(1), pp. 23-35. Kaplan, A. (2013). <i>Introduction to Paradise</i> . Tel Aviv: Resling, pp. 19-47.
3	Old age from a social-structural perspective: ageism, neglect of the aged, intergenerational relationships	Bodner, A. (2011). “Sources of ageism among old and young people”. <i>Gerontology</i> , 38(2-3), pp. 19-40. Alon, S., & Doron, Y. (2009). “Neglect of the aged – theoretical, legal, and practical aspects”. <i>Gerontology</i> , 36(1), pp. 69-91.
4	Old age and death: The effect of life circumstances on quality of life	Kaplan, A. (2006). “Death is the future – On the culture of death and the end of life”. In Y. Doron (Ed.), <i>At home and not in an institution – On the right to die at home</i> . Jerusalem: Eshel, pp. 37-71.

		Ron, P. (2009). "Factors that predict death anxiety and death among old people in Israel". <i>Gerontology</i> , 36(1), pp. 13-30.
5	Finding meaning in life – its place and contribution in old age	Frankl, V.E. (1981). <i>Man's Search for Meaning</i> . Tel Aviv: Dvir, Part 2, pp. 117-161. Rappaport, A. (2010). "Innovative typology of the essence of boredom among old people in particular". <i>Gerontology</i> , 37(4), pp. 23-41.
6	An old person's last home: Life in comprehensive organizations and their effect on the meaning of life in old age	Kaplan, A. (2013). <i>Introduction to Paradise</i> . Tel Aviv: Resling, chapters 3-4. Goffman, A. (2006). <i>On the characteristics of total institutions</i> . Tel Aviv: Resling, pp. 39-84.
7	Qualitative research methods: Narrative research and its contribution to understanding old age	Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Spector-Marzel, G. (2010) (Eds.). <i>Narrative research: Creativity, interpretation and criticism</i> . Jerusalem: Mofet and Magnes Publishing, Part 1 – Chapter 2; Part 2 – Chapters 5, 7; Part 3 – Chapters 9, 10. Shkedi, A. (2011). <i>The meaning behind the words – Methodologies in qualitative research</i> . Tel Aviv University: Ramot Publishing, Parts 1 & 2.
8	Introduction to cognition, and a review of cognitive abilities in old age	Hummert, M. L. (2011). "Age stereotypes and aging". In K. W. Schaie & S. L. Willis, <i>Handbook of the Psychology of Aging</i> (7th ed.). London: Elsevier, pp. 249-262.
9	Intelligence in old age	Nagel, I.E., Chicherio, C., Li, S.C., von Oertzen, T., Sander, T., Villringer, A., Heekeren, H.R., Bäckman, L., & Lindenberger, U. (2008). "Human aging magnifies genetic effects on executive functioning and working memory". <i>Frontiers in Human Neuroscience</i> , 2, 1-10.
10	Memory and language in old age	Squire, L. (2004). "Memory systems of the brain: A brief history and current perspective". <i>Neurobiology of Learning and Memory</i> , 82, pp. 171-177.
11	Training of cognitive abilities in old age	Erickson, K. I., Colcombe, S. J., Wadhwa, R., Bherer, L., Peterson, M. S., Scalf, P. E., Kim, J. S., Alvarado, M., & Kramer, A. F. (2007). "Training-induced plasticity in older adults: Effects of

		training on hemispheric symmetry". <i>Neurobiology Of Aging</i> , 28, pp. 272-283.
12	Lifestyle and its effects on cognitive abilities in old age	Small, B. J., Dixon, R. A., McArdle, J. J., & Grimm, K. J. (2012). "Changes in lifestyle activities as moderators of age-related declines in cognitive abilities: Evidence from the Victoria Longitudinal Study". <i>Neuropsychology</i> , 26 (2), pp. 144-155.
13	Quantitative research methods – the experiment	Bite-Marom, R., & Saporta, K. (2003). <i>Research Methods in Social Sciences, Unit 6 – The Experiment</i> (2 nd ed.). Open University Press.

Additional elective reading

1. Braver, T. S., & Barch, D. A. (2002). A theory of cognitive control, aging cognition, and neuromodulation. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 26, 809-817.
2. Gatz, M. (2005). Educating the brain to avoid dementia: Can mental exercise prevent Alzheimer disease? *PLoS Medicine*, 2, 38-40.
3. Tranter, L. J., & Koutstaal, W. (2008). Age and flexible thinking: An experimental demonstration of the beneficial effects of increased cognitively stimulating activity on fluid intelligence in healthy older adults. *Aging, Neuropsychology, and Cognition*, 15, 184-207.

