

## **Individual Report of the Committee for the Evaluation of Economics Study-Programs: COMAS Response**

We received, with great satisfaction (especially regarding our BA program), the report of the Committee appointed by the CHE for evaluating the B.A. in Economics and Management and M.A. in Applied Economics study-programs at the College of Management Academic Studies (COMAS).

Following is our response to the committee recommendations listed in the chapter 4 of the evaluation report, entitled "Summary of Recommendations":

Committee Recommendation	<u>Steps toward implementation (including time table)</u>
<p><u>1.</u> The college should articulate and communicate its mission and vision in terms of the balance between research and teaching.</p>	<p>This is the current policy existing in the last few years. The new president and vice president try to change the balance between research and teaching and to encourage faculty to be more engaged with research. Research is the major part in faculty performance evaluation and especially within the promotion process. Also, the college decided last year to recruit only faculty members who are active researchers.</p>
<p><u>2.</u> The new policy to enhance and strengthen research should be implemented. If research is sufficiently strengthened, an MA program is conceivable.</p>	<p>Within the recent years we are trying to enhance and strengthen research record of our faculty. The new vice president, Prof. Shmuel Ellis, established a new college-wide forum for junior researchers that aim to share concepts and research ideas and methodologies. In addition, we encourage and sponsor each researcher to apply research grants, and collaborate with researchers from other academic institutions in Israel and abroad. We support and encourage participation of our faculty in academic international conferences.</p>
<p><u>3.</u> The committee appreciates the School's outreach to students with a weaker academic background. An analysis of the resulting heterogeneity of the student body and its specific consequences for teaching should be carried out. It should lead to the</p>	<p>We have initiated a project in which three faculty members from our school (Dr. Dalit Gafni, Dr. Shahar Sansani and Dr. Itamar Shabtai) will conduct a research on this interesting and essential issue. We believe that within the next 2-3 years we will obtain results and conclusions.</p>

<p>implementation of an institutional policy regarding this issue.</p>	
<p><u>4.</u> More English courses and an enhancement of writing skills in English should be added to the study program.</p>	<p>We agree with the committee. We think that each student, within the BA and MA programs, needs to study at least one course in English. In the next academic year we will provide the MA students with one course in English. Our target that within the next 2-3 years each student in our school will study at least one course in English.</p>
<p><u>1</u> The MA program in its current form should not be awarded full accreditation.</p>	<p>We do not agree with this recommendation! Few months ago the CHE has appointed a two experts to review and examine our MA program, in order to grant us full accreditation. Both distinguished experts, who have carefully and fundamentally inspected this MA in Applied Economics program, recommended to approve this MA program by the CHE. As we understand the current international Evaluation committee has devoted most of its efforts to examine the School's undergraduate programs in Economics and Management. Regarding our MA program in Applied Economics we believe that it is well-balanced between theory and practical tools, designed NOT for students who plan to further study for PHD, but rather for those who are heading to the labor market as economists. We have followed the improvements suggested by the CHE committee in the last 6 years.</p>

We thank the Committee for its fine work and positive evaluation of our institution.