

May 24, 2017

Council for Higher Education

**Committee for the Evaluation of Medical and Biomedical
Engineering Study Programs,
Ben Gurion University of the Negev**

Dear Members,

Re: Response of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FOHS) regarding the dual academic
structure of the Department of Biomedical Engineering (BME).

The Faculty of Health Sciences wishes to relate to certain comments made by the
Department of Biomedical Engineering.

REMARK: "Collaboration with the Faculty of Health Sciences complicates the
process of creating a coherent, organized curriculum. It also limits the flexibility of
the department head in staffing courses.

REPLY: There are standard ways by which joint programs are run, which the BME
department refuses to accept. We propose to split the responsibility, as common in
joint programs, and to give FOHS direct responsibility for the courses in the
curriculum that are relevant to FOHS. See below.

REMARK: "Adjunct faculty teach some courses for which the FOHS has
responsibility and this add a layer of unnecessary bureaucracy"

REPLY: This is simply untrue. Except for anatomy, all courses are taught by Faculty
members.

REMARK: "The bulk of teaching done by the FOHS is done by pre-clinical faculty
whose expertise in the subjects being taught is similar to the expertise of faculty in the
BME department"

REPLY: There is something in the University defined as "academic responsibility"
and even in Medical school basic science topics are taught by the basic science
division. Personal knowledge of a specific researcher does not make him
academically responsible for a topic. Therefore, FOHS should be the one responsible
for the medical topics.

REMARK: "there is room for productive collaboration in joint teaching"

REPLY: FOHS has offered to extend the medical curriculum to more clinical and
applicative courses, but BME refused due to lack of space.

REMARK: “Successful cooperation with the FOHS depends on building mechanism where both sides feel that they have the appropriate input to the curriculum and the overall structure of the degrees the eventual status of the Cell Biology course is one of the topics that needs to be resolved with the FOHS”.

REPLY: The BME department has been dragging its feet for years. Regarding the Cell Biology course, after they took over the teaching of the course one-sidedly, they have been unwilling to release this course back to the FOHS. Discussions held with them revealed no respect to the academic norms and basic principles and without clear deadlines have been always futile.

CONCLUSION:

The FOHS appreciates the recommendation for dual management very much. Indeed, the dual management has been working well for many years. However, at present this structure lacks a valid agreement between the two Faculties, as the previous agreement has eroded and is not fulfilled. A new agreement must be achieved very soon, or the Faculty of Health Sciences will have to reevaluate its responsibilities to the management of the program.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AK', written in a cursive style.

Prof. Amos Katz, M.D.
Dean