



**Committee for the Evaluation of English Teacher Education  
Study Programs**

**Givat Washington Academic College of Education**

**Department of English**

Evaluation Report

**April 2018**

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## **Chapter 1: Background**

The Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of English Teacher Education during the academic year of 2016-2017.

Following the decision of the CHE, the Vice Chair of the CHE appointed a Committee consisting of:

- **Prof. Claude Goldenberg**, Stanford University, USA - committee chair
- **Prof. Charlene Rivera**, The George Washington University, Washington DC, USA.
- **Prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall**, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA.
- **Prof. R. Malatesha Joshi**, Texas A&M University, USA.
- **Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler**, The State University of New York at Buffalo, USA.
- **Prof. Penny Ur**, Oranim Academic College, Israel.
- **Prof. Bernard Spolsky** (Emeritus), Bar-Ilan University, Israel.
- **Prof. Hana Wirth-Nesher**, Tel-Aviv University, Israel.

Ms. Maria Levinson-Or and Ms. Molly Abramson served as the Coordinators of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:<sup>1</sup>

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in English Teacher Education, 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 September 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> The Committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

## **Chapter 2: Committee Procedures**

The Committee held its first meetings on 21.05.2017, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as English Teacher Education Study programs in Israel.

In May 2017, the Committee held its first visit of evaluation, and visited the David Yellin Academic College of Education, Talpiot College of Education, Jerusalem College, Orot College, Kaye Academic College of Education, and Herzog College. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

In June 2017, the Committee held an additional visit of evaluation, and visited Levinsky College of Education, Beit Berl College (including the Arab Academic Institute), and Kibbutzim College of Education. Similar to the previous visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff and students.

In December 2017, the Committee held its final visit of evaluation, and visited Oranim Academic College, Ohalo College in Katzrin - Academic Institute for Education, Sciences and Sports, Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education, the College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education, the Academic Arab College of Education in Haifa, the Gordon College of Education, Shaanan Academic Religious Teachers' College, Achva Academic College, Givat Washington Academic College of Education, and Hemdat HaDarom Academic College of Education. As conducted in May and June 2017, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff and students.

This report deals with the Department of English Teacher Education at Givat Washington Academic College of Education. The Committee's visit to Givat Washington took place on December 11, 2017.

Due to scheduling considerations, the committee split into two groups and held simultaneous visits in the institutions. The group that visited Givat Washington Academic College of Education was co-chaired by Professor, and included Professor Brutt-Griffler, Professor Joshi and Professor Splosky.

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

The Committee thanks the management of Givat Washington Academic College of Education and the Department of English Teacher Education for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

## **Chapter 3: Evaluation of English Teacher Education Study Program at Givat Washington Academic College of Education**

*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.*

### **1. Executive Summary**

Givat Washington Academic College has its roots in the education of Holocaust refugee children after World War II and has absorbed immigrants from a number of countries since then, including Ethiopians and young people from Russia. In 1953, the Washington Teacher's Seminary was opened, and in 2002, the College was recognized as an Institution of Higher Education. Givat Washington College is a Torah-based educational institution, integrating Torah and practice, along with the personal attention to students.

The English Department was established at the Givat-Washington Teaching Seminary 30 years ago, to help meet a critical shortage of English teachers in the Southern periphery, an area in which on average, the population is from lower socio-economic levels and the level of education is lower, especially among schools in the religious sector. From the beginning, it has been graduating and providing teacher certification for teachers in lower division secondary school. Since its recognition as an Institution of Higher Education by the Council for Higher Education in 2002, the English Department has been awarding a B.Ed. in English language teaching to its graduates, in addition to the teaching certificate. The degree is part of a double major: students specialize in both English and one other discipline (Bible studies or special education). The College focuses on training English teachers for the Southern periphery. It serves primarily women, and women form a high percentage of the teaching staff, including the Head of the Department. It is relatively small, with about 500 students, 89 in the English programs, and one of its goals is to empower women to take leadership positions. It is also exploring providing up to 30% of its courses online, which could result in increased enrollment.

Overall, the program provides adequate preparation for successful beginning teaching. We have a number of suggestions in five categories: Study Programs, Faculty/Human Resources, Infrastructure, Internationalization, and Alumni.

## **2. Study Programs**

### **Observations and findings**

#### **Programs**

Currently, the College offers a B.Ed. in English and another major of Bible Studies or Special Education (a dual track major) for post-elementary grades (7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>) requiring that students do their practical training in both areas. This limits the number of hours devoted to developing proficiency in English or engaging in practice teaching in English. The English portion of the B.Ed. program is comprised of 49 credits (37 English Department courses taught through the medium of English plus 12 general education courses taught in Hebrew), plus eight hours of practice teaching, and three credits for Basic Studies. Upon completion of the program, students receive a certificate for teaching English in the 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Although the program is focused on teaching students in lower secondary grades, many obtain their first teaching positions in elementary classrooms and those who teach students in lower secondary grades often find that their students have limited English proficiency, where familiarity with teaching early English reading and writing would be helpful.

The College has submitted a proposal to offer a single-track major for the B.Ed. in English, but this has not been approved. It has also submitted a five-year plan which included that single major. A single multi-track English major would prepare students to teach at both elementary and upper secondary levels. It would also increase the amount of time that students have learning through English and using English in their practical training, as they would not spend time in teaching another subject (through the medium of Hebrew).

The College also offers a Retraining Program (for students with an academic degree who are proficient in English) and a Certificate Expansion Program (for students with a diploma from a seminar who wish to have an academic degree/equivalent diploma), as well as a one-year Accelerated Retraining Program for students with a higher level of English. These are two-year programs of 50 credits, 26 of which are in English (and taught through the medium of English); 18 in Education (taught through Hebrew); and 6 in practical training. The courses required for this program include: Grammar, English Syntax, Phonetics, Introduction to Linguistics, a Seminar, and four credits of Literature, as well as electives chosen from courses on The Holocaust: The Polish Story; Thinking Skills and the Teaching of Literature, and Women's Literature.

The double major makes delivery of the practical training more difficult, with the need to find schools and mentor teachers in more than one subject. This, we were told, comes from a belief that the local state religious schools are not large enough to offer full time employment for English teachers. However, this belief should be checked by a survey. Joining up with other Academic Colleges of Education with similar ideologies should deal with this, and permit and encourage the development of collaboration in English teacher training programs, leading to improvement.

The number of students in the English double track major in the B.Ed. program is small, with 46 students in the regular program, 33 in the academic retraining and certificate expansion programs, and 10 in the accelerated program. The size of the College is set essentially by demography – the low density of religious residents in the area. An obvious corollary is the shortage of candidates in English teacher training, so that the classes are quite small. Although there are advantages in small numbers of students, which the staff appear to be making good use of with greater personalization, the program suffers from its small size. Current initiatives to enable faculty to provide online courses could have the potential to increase the number of students for the program, but that will require some upgrading or stabilizing of the current technological infrastructure. Mergers, however, will not necessarily increase class size.

### **Curriculum**

In order to achieve a rounded education in EFL, the curriculum should include, we believe, four elements. First, proficiency in the language: accuracy, fluency and complexity; second, knowledge of linguistics and a deeper understanding of the structure of the English language; third, knowledge and appreciation of English-language literature: poetry, fiction and drama; and last but certainly not least, the methodology and pedagogy of teaching English as a foreign or global language. All courses in the department belong to these four categories. In every year of their studies, the students take courses belonging to all four categories, with the level of difficulty rising from year to year. All courses offered by the English Department are taught through English. However, pedagogical courses, which include students preparing to be teachers in other fields, are taught through Hebrew, as are courses in the Bible Studies major.

### **Syllabi**

In general, syllabi are excellent, with clear student learning outcomes, a schedule of weekly topics and readings, and required assignments and assessments. In some cases, learning outcomes need to be revised to indicate how success will be measurable.

### **Proficiency**

Students in the B.Ed. program must meet the minimum requirements set by the Ministry Of Education (MOE), which until recently were viewed as too low to ensure that students would have sufficient proficiency to begin practice teaching. The entry requirements have been raised in the past two years, with the Department noticing an improvement. Those who do not meet those requirements are not admitted to the English department. They also have an interview to determine their suitability for teaching, although some adjustment is made for those students who come from a very disadvantaged background. Academic retraining students go through an interview with the Head of the English Department, as well as tests of reading comprehension and writing. The retraining and expansion students have an entrance exam and an interview.

Students in the B.Ed. program take 6 hours of proficiency-related courses in Oral Expression, Written Expression and Comprehension during their first two years. In addition, 20% of the grade of any assignment in other courses is focused on proficiency, and topics and texts in these courses are often selected to encourage students to think critically and speak about meaningful topics in English. Class size is small which is helpful for students' growth in English.

Students who do not show improvement after the first semester are not permitted to continue in the program. Those who do not achieve an 80 in their oral expression course are not permitted to enter practical training.

The College currently does not have a language lab, which could be helpful in improving students' English proficiency. However, the College and the English Department provide a number of additional activities in which students are able to improve their English. These include English Days, which the department conducts on its own, inviting external speakers and providing interesting workshops on a variety of topics. In addition, a recent activity was a trip to the seat of government in Jerusalem, where students had an opportunity to meet with and engage in a thought-provoking discussion with an English-speaking member of the Israeli parliament. A Polish Holocaust course (which is being expanded to include Hungary), enabled some Polish students to come to the College, but lack of resources prevented the College students from going to Poland. Other activities include "Israel Connect" where Canadians speak online with students; a debating course; a yearly conference where students make presentations. The Head of the English Department has also proposed offering English summer camps in which students in the program would tutor children in the schools, which would provide additional practice teaching for the students.

The double major also reduces exposure to English and weakens the proficiency program.

## **Literature**

Reading, writing, and discussions of topics related to social, religious, historical, and gender issues in literature have increased awareness of social justice issues and also have a lasting and beneficial effect. Additionally, topics and texts are often selected to encourage students to think critically and discuss important issues. For example, as part of one course requirement, students use speeches by Barack Obama and Martin Luther King. A new course on “Thinking Skills and the Teaching of Literature” has a goal of developing students’ higher order thinking skills; this is also a goal of the “Jewish-American Literature” course. Further, in the Written Expression II course, students are assigned to research their family history within the context of the absorption of Jews from Arab-speaking countries in Israel.

## **Linguistics**

The program aims to provide both the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching linguistics and literacy courses. However, the various linguistics courses need to provide more direct instruction on practical applications, with less emphasis on lectures and more opportunities for practice.

## **Practical Training**

In the past, students in the B.Ed. program were in schools during their first year. This was recently changed, with no practical training in the first year, which is unfortunate, as students need to begin experiencing their future role as teachers as soon as possible.

They are in schools for one day a week during their second and third years, during which time they teach individual students or small groups, and also prepare lesson plans to teach for an entire class. They are also in the schools during student teaching week each semester, when they teach a unit with a number of lessons. In addition, during the first week of the school year, English majors spend time in the school, getting to know the school, their master teacher, and the classes they are going to teach. The pedagogical counselor, who also teaches the methodology courses, observes and monitors their student teaching. However, more emphasis needs to be placed on the application of theory.

The double major required for the B.Ed. Program results in a number of problems with practice teaching. It is difficult to find schools and teachers where students can teach courses in both programs (English and Bible Studies or Special Education) during the same day. It also reduces the number of hours for students to use and teach through English.

## **Students**

Students complete surveys at the end of every course. Concerns are followed up by the administration. Because of the small number of students, the College and the Department can provide individual attention and response to problems. The College offers scholarships for students experiencing financial difficulty. It also financial aid for students in the campus mentoring program.

Most students in the English programs live close to campus. Many have children, but the day care facility is only available to students who live on campus.

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Essential/ Important/ Desirable</u></b>
<b>Programs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless a survey shows that there is no demand for full-time English teachers, the College should offer a single major in English.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The College should also investigate the possibility of having a double track, providing students with certification to teach in both elementary and lower secondary grades.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The College should continue to seek ways to increase enrollment in English teacher training, such as exploring mergers with other colleges and use of more online and hybrid courses.</li> </ul>	Important
<b>Curriculum</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the degree possible, pedagogy courses should be taught in English.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<b>Proficiency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The College should continue to monitor the impact of higher entrance requirements on students' English proficiency.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<b>Literature</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be more direct instruction on how to teach literature.</li> </ul>	Important
<b>Linguistics</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linguistics courses should also provide focus more on practical application.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<b>Practical Training</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methodology courses should emphasize how to apply theory in practice.</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students should be in schools during their first year.</li> </ul>	Important
<b>Students</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The College should consider ways of increasing student enrollment, such as offering a single major and/or combining with other colleges with similar philosophy</li> </ul>	<i>Essential</i>

### **3. Faculty/Human Resources**

#### **Observations and findings**

If research is to be a major factor in faculty promotion, the College will need to provide more support (reduced teaching load, funds for conference participation, etc.). It also needs to provide clear expectations of the research activity output. However, since this is a College of Education, focused on preparing effective teachers, teacher evaluation and promotion should rely heavily on teaching. The College has established a new research authority, which will be seeking international collaborations and cooperation with institutions abroad. Applied research related to the teaching and learning of English should be a priority (for example, research such as that undertaken by one the faculty focusing on students' language learning history as part of the significance of English in the experienced of EFL teachers).

Currently the Head of the Department is also the Coordinator of the English for Academic Purposes program. That responsibility should be assigned to another faculty member.

We have been told that the College plans to increase its online courses to about 30%. However, faculty will need extensive professional development to provide effective online instruction.

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Essential/ Important/ Desirable</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If the College plans to provide an increasing number of online courses, it should provide professional development for both faculty and students.</li></ul>	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for research, such as reduced teaching loads or financial incentives, should be provided if research is to be a primary consideration in promotion.</li></ul>	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As a teacher-training college, applied research, especially focused on teaching and learning, should be a priority.</li></ul>	Desirable

### **4. Infrastructure**

#### **Observations and findings**

The College has a new building with an auditorium, classrooms, computer laboratories, and offices for department heads, though two department heads still have to

share an office. It is not clear whether any of the computer labs will be able to function as well as a language lab. If not, then the College should consider adding one.

In addition, currently Wi-Fi services are not reliable. This is important, because the College is offering online courses and many students live on campus.

Currently, the library has limited, but sufficient, texts related to the teaching of English and to literary texts in English. However, the library databases are quite limited. Only one database, EBSCO, has relevant texts, but the library only receives the abstracts, rather than the full texts. It will be important to have the full-text version.

As many of the students at the College are married, with children, there is dormitory space provided on campus, but only for families. There is also a day care center, but it is restricted for use by students who live on campus. Expanding both the dormitory space and the use of the daycare center to students who do not live on campus would be helpful and may make it possible for more students to attend.

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Essential/ Important/ Desirable</u></b>
• Reliable Wi-Fi services should be provided for students who reside on campus, for online learning, and for incorporating multi-media in classes.	<i>Essential</i>
• The College should subscribe to the full-text version of the EBSCO database.	<i>Essential</i>
• A language lab should be developed to support students who are having difficulty with English proficiency.	Important
• The College should provide space where faculty and students can meet to facilitate feedback to students.	Important
• A specialist in web design and e-learning who can also provide faculty members with professional development should be hired to ensure the quality of online course delivery.	Desirable
• The day care center should be made available to students who do not live on campus.	Desirable

## **5. Internationalization**

### **Observations and findings**

The College has a number of initiatives to increase students' international perspectives and to provide opportunities for students to communicate through English.

During 2016-17, the academic retraining and certificate expansion students were offered a one-hour course on The Holocaust: The Polish Story, which was related to Jewish-Polish history from the 1900's till 1956, with emphasis on the period of the Holocaust. This class was also taught, in parallel, at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. A joint syllabus was prepared by the instructors at the two teacher training colleges. The course was taught to seven Israeli student teachers who were training to become English as a second language teachers and to eight Polish student teachers who were training to become Polish language and literature teachers and culture educators. The Polish student teachers were Christians while the Israeli pre- service teachers were Jewish. In addition, through Israel Connect, Canadians spoke online with 10-15 students. These initiatives are very important and should be expanded to include more students.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/ Important/ Desirable</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The College should expand the number and participation in internationalization initiatives</li> </ul>	Desirable

## 6. Alumni

### Observations and findings

The College maintains close contact with alumni during the first year after graduation, a time in which the alumni also attend professional development courses. The College currently does not have a system for regularly communicating with the alumni about events on campus or how the alumni can support the mission of the College. Currently, there is no formal alumni association or system for contacting alumni. The Head of the English Department functions in this capacity, providing information on possible employment or events on campus or requesting that alumni serve as cooperating teachers. A more formal system for contacting alumni should be considered.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/ Important/ Desirable</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A formal alumni association should be developed to keep in contact with former students and to improve the visibility of the program</li> </ul>	Important

## **Chapter 4 – Summary of Recommendations**

### **Essential:**

- Unless a survey shows that there is no demand for full-time English teachers, the College should offer a single major in English.
- The College should also investigate the possibility of having a double track, providing students with certification to teach in both elementary and lower secondary grades.
- To the degree possible, pedagogy courses should be taught in English.
- The College should continue to monitor the impact of higher entrance requirements on students' English proficiency.
- Linguistics courses should also provide focus more on practical application.
- Methodology courses should emphasize how to apply theory in practice.
- The College should consider ways of increasing student enrollment, such as offering a single major and/or combining with other colleges with similar philosophy.
- If the College plans to provide an increasing number of online courses, it should provide professional development for both faculty and students.
- Reliable Wi-Fi services should be provided for students who reside on campus, for online learning, and for incorporating multi-media in classes.
- The College should subscribe to the full-text version of the EBSCO database.

### **Important:**

- The College should continue to seek ways to increase enrollment in English teacher training, such as exploring mergers with other colleges and use of more online and hybrid courses.
- There should be more direct instruction on how to teach literature.
- Students should be in schools during their first year.
- Support for research, such as reduced teaching loads or financial incentives, should be provided if research is to be a primary consideration in promotion.
- A language lab should be developed to support students who are having difficulty with English proficiency.
- The College should provide space where faculty and students can meet to facilitate feedback to students.
- A formal alumni association should be developed to keep in contact with former students and to improve the visibility of the program

**Desirable:**

- As a teacher-training college, applied research, especially focused on teaching and learning, should be a priority.
- A specialist in web design and e-learning who can also provide faculty members with professional development should be hired to ensure the quality of online course delivery.
- The day care center should be made available to students who do not live on campus.
- The College should expand the number and participation in internationalization initiatives

**Signed by:**



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Prof. Claude Goldenberg – Chair



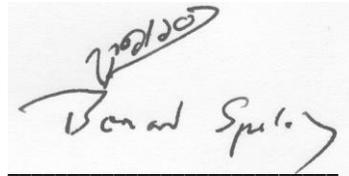
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Prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall – Co-Chair



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Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler



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Prof. Bernard Spolsky



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Prof. R. Malatesha Joshi

## **Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment**



January 2017

Prof. Claude Goldenberg  
Graduate School of Education  
Stanford University  
USA

Dear Professor,

The Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) strives to ensure the continuing excellence and quality of Israeli higher education through a systematic evaluation process. By engaging upon this mission, the CHE seeks: 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.

As part of this important endeavor we reach out to world renowned academicians to help us meet the challenges that confront the Israeli higher education by accepting our invitation to participate in our international evaluation committees. This process establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial enterprise.

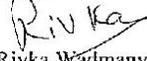
It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **English Teacher Education**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler, prof. JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall, prof. Malatesha Joshi, prof. Charlene Rivera, prof. Bernard Spolsky, Penny Ur and prof. Hana Wirth-Nesher.

Ms. Maria Levinson-Or will be the coordinator of the Committee.

Details regarding the operation of the committee and its mandate are provided in the enclosed appendix.

I wish you much success in your role as a member of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

  
Dr. Rivka Wadmany  
Vice Chair,  
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

*Enclosures:* Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

cc: Dr. Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for QA, CHIE  
Ms. Maria Levinson-Or, Committee Coordinator

**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

<u>English Teacher Education - Schedule of site visit</u> <u>Givat Washington Academic College of Education</u> <u>December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Conference Room</u>		
09:00-09:45	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Prof. Aharon Gedanken (President of the College) Dr. Yaacov Twito (Head of the College)
09:45-10:30	Meeting with the Head of the Study program	Dr. Miri Baum
<b>10:30-10:45</b>	<b>Break</b>	
10:45-12:00	Meeting with senior academic staff and pedagogical instructors * (up to 8)	Dr. Michael Schneidman, Dr. Klarina Priborkin, Dr. Sharon Azaria, Dr. Hasia Friedman.
<b>12:00-12:45</b>	<b>Lunch (in the same room)</b>	<b>Closed-door meeting of the committee</b>
12:45-13:30	Tour of library	Ms. Helena Abramovitch Dr. Miri Baum
13:30-14:15	Meeting with B.Ed students** (up to 6)	
14:15-15:00	Meeting with Alumni** (up to 6)	
<b>15:00-15:20</b>	<b>Closed-door meeting of the committee</b>	
15:20-15:45	Closing meeting	Prof. Aharon Gedanken Dr. Yaacov Twito Dr. Miri Baum