



**Committee for the Evaluation of Social Work and Human Services  
Study Programs**

**School of Social Work, University of Haifa**

Evaluation Report

**March 2016**

## Contents

<b>Chapter 1:</b>	Background.....	3
<b>Chapter 2:</b>	Committee Procedures.....	4
<b>Chapter 3:</b>	Evaluation of Social Work Study Program at University of Haifa .....	5
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	General Recommendations and Timetable.....	

**Appendices:** Appendix 1 – Letter of Appointment

Appendix 2 - Schedule of the visit

## **Chapter 1- Background**

The Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to evaluate study programs in the field of Social Work and Human Services during the academic year of 2015.

Following the decision of the CHE, Vice Chair of the Council of Higher Education on behalf of the Minister of Education, appointed a Committee consisting of:

- **Prof. Allan Borowski**- School of Social Work and Social Policy, La Trobe University ,Melbourne, Australia (Ageing; Retirement; Migration; Cohesion; Delinquency) Committee Chair
- **Prof. Michàlle Mor Barak** - School of Social Work & Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, USA (social work and management)
- **Prof. Ram Cnaan** - School of Policy and Practice, University of Pennsylvania, USA (faith based social services, social policy)
- **Prof. David Biegel** - Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, USA (family as a unit, family welfare)
- **Prof. Zahava Solomon**- School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University, Israel (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and secondary PTSD)
- **Prof. Sven Hesse**-School of Social work, Stockholm University, Sweden (poverty and children and their families in an international perspective as well as International social work)

***Ms. Alex Buslovich Bilik*** was the coordinator 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 Social Work and Human Services 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 2014).

---

<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 March 8<sup>th</sup> 2015, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as Social Work and Human Services Study programs in Israel.

In March 2015, the Committee held its visits of evaluation, and visited The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel Hai Academic College, Haifa University, Ariel University, Emek Yizrael Academic College, Ashqelon Academic college, Tel Aviv University, Ben Gurion University, Sapir Academic College and Bar Ilan University. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

This report deals with the School of Social Work at Haifa University University. The Committee's visit to Haifa University took place on Monday March 9<sup>th</sup> ,2015.

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

The Committee thanks the management of Haifa University and the School of Social Work for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

## **Chapter 3: Evaluation of Social Work Study Program at the University of Haifa**

### **Executive Summary**

The School of Social Work at the University of Haifa is part of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, the only School of Social Work in Israel to be housed in a faculty that is health oriented. The School was founded in 1965 and was the second academic School of Social Work to open in Israel. The faculty's research is interdisciplinary, covers a wide range of research methodologies and focuses on many pressing issues.

The School offers BA, pre-Masters, MA by both coursework and thesis track, and PhD programs. It has a large number of students. There are 29 full-time faculty members including 7 full professors, 9 associate professors, 7 senior lecturers, 6 lecturers and no teachers in the teachers track. There are also 31 adjunct instructors. The School is "top heavy" in terms of senior professors approaching retirement and is thus on the threshold of a significant generational shift.

As a large school with many programs and aspirations for still further expansion (e.g., an international PhD program), the inadequacy of resources commensurate with the ongoing expansion means that workloads in terms of teaching and supervision are excessively high. Faculty receive no teaching load reductions from bringing in research grants and high teaching loads adversely affect research productivity.

### **1. Organizational Structure**

The School of Social Work at the University of Haifa is highly appreciated by the university. It is one of the largest schools on campus and one that is influential. This is the only School of Social Work in Israel to be housed in a faculty that is health oriented. The School of Social Work was the unit around which the new Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences was established. Both the Rector, the Dean of the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences and the School's leadership view the School's location in the Faculty as prominent and advantageous. The School has many successful collaborations with the other departments in the Faculty which have led to joint research projects and joint publications.

Given the severe shortage of space for faculty members and the School's academic programs, we were encouraged to learn that the university is in the process of building a new building for the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences and that the School of Social Work will be the first to move to that building once built. It's the Committee's understanding that this new building will address the School's current space shortages and will allow future growth.

## **2. Mission and Goals**

The School was founded in 1965 and was the second academic School of Social Work to open in Israel. From 1974 until 1995 the School was one of the four independent academic units within the university. In 1995 the university opened a Faculty of Welfare and Health Studies, of which the School of Social Work became a part, together with other departments. The School has been the largest unit of the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences in terms of student body, recruitment of faculty and administrative staff.

The university is the only university in the northern part of Israel. It attracts many students of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds who come from both urban and rural areas. The university's mission statement refers primarily to its academic aspirations to rank among the top universities in Israel and worldwide. The School appears to work hard to conform to these aspirations as reflected in the level of productivity of its faculty members and in its emphasis on recruiting new faculty with strong research programs and a trajectory for scholarly excellence. Yet, due to budgetary constraints, this continues to be a struggle.

The School's mission is clear and relevant to the profession and it fits with the Faculty's mission. Having said that, the mission requires review and revision. It notes that the School's mission is to develop leading scholars when, in fact, its primary mission is, as befitting a School of Social Work, to develop leading social work practitioners. This was confirmed during the site visit. This has clear implications for recruitment where candidates also need to bring some depth in practice experience to their academic role.

The School appears to have strong support from the central administration of the university. Similar to many professional schools embedded within research-intensive universities, the self-study report reflects the constant tension of meeting scientific and scholarly expectations and the responsibility to produce competent entry-level and advanced social workers. This tension, together with the added issue of limited resources, puts a lot of strain on an already stretched system and was a common theme throughout the self-study report and during the Committee's site visit.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Essential changes required:**

The School's mission statement should be revised to reflect its primary purpose of developing leading social work practitioners.

### **3. Study Programs**

The School offers BA, pre-Master's, MA by both coursework and a thesis track, and PhD degree programs and has a large number of students. It enjoys considerable support from the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences and the Rector's office.

Students are very serious about their learning and expressed the desire for additional learning opportunities. This was very impressive. Students in the MA and PhD programs gave positive feedback about the quality of the faculty and the faculty members' concern for the students. The Committee believes that the School was very responsive to the issues raised in the 2007 external review concerning field practicum. Significant changes were made to the field practicum including development of a new Field Department at the School, coordination in student learning through collaboration between faculty teaching practice courses and field staff, and the establishment of learning objectives for the field that are assessed three times per year. (But note that some BA students remain concerned about the quality and relevance of some of the first year pre-field placements.)

#### BA and MA Programs

The Committee was impressed by the effort over recent years to more clearly distinguish the BA degree from the MA degree by means of an apparent shift towards a more generic BA program on the one hand and a specialized MA on the other.

There were, however, a number of concerns that the Committee identified. Limited financial resources, together with a large number of students, negatively affect the quality of the BA and MA programs. Large numbers of students in BA and MA practice classes make it difficult to teach classes in a seminar format needed for practice learning. Class sizes in the MA program's practice courses have been increasing to 24 students changing the courses from discussion to lecture formats that are inappropriate for these types of courses in professional social work education.

An area of *major* concern to the Committee is student assessment. Because of large course sizes in BA and MA programs, faculty members often rely on multiple choice exams and do not assess student writing or analytic ability. Thus, students don't receive feedback on their work other than grades. No feedback or comments are provided by faculty members about the quality of their academic work. Students reported few classes in which they were required to write papers. There are very few TAs for faculty who teach large course sections.

With regard to the final MA (by coursework) exam, this is reported in the self-study evaluation as a compilation of contributions from each teacher of the required courses, courses which, presumably, have previously been assessed. If so, this begs the question as to the rationale for this final exam.

The School has not yet explored strategies for exploring needed changes in teaching methodology to address large class sizes, for example, use of TAs, e-learning approaches, mixed use of e-learning and on-site discussion sections, adjusting class meeting times/hours, reducing the number of students, reducing the total number of classes offered by having fewer specializations, etc.

Given limited resources, priorities need to be established in order to offer students a high quality MA program that offers depth and a reasonable amount of breadth. There are too many specializations that try to cover too many different areas of practice and not enough elective courses to properly cover each of these areas. This large number of specializations requires a significant amount of resources to deliver.

Faculty members complain that they have limited incentives for supervising MA students. There are not enough faculty members to supervise MA students in the thesis track option. Only 25% of students in the MA program choose the thesis option because of the difficulty finding faculty with which to work. The numbers admitted to the MA thesis track should be shaped by the supervision capacity of the faculty. If students cannot be adequately supervised and supervision guaranteed to each student enrolled in the thesis track, then numbers should be reduced accordingly.

The Committee regards it as “curious” that some students graduating from the University of Haifa can be awarded an MA in social work after two years of study while, for others, it takes three years (the thesis track) and sometimes even four years. The three year format for the MA Program with thesis (four years for those who enter through the pre-Masters route) is at odds with the Bologna model of a two-year MA program. (Master’s degrees in the US, Canada and Australia, for example, are also normally of two years duration.) This situation may suggest that the requirements for the thesis track Master’s degree are relatively excessive.

We have similar concerns about the pre-Masters retraining program. This program is effectively a three-year program (with the first year – the pre-Masters component – having no diploma or degree status at all). Why this *hasava* program should take three years when other *hasava* programs in Israel take only two years (but only “yield” a BA degree) is unclear from the self-evaluation report. Whether two or three years, both types of *hasava* programs only prepare students for entry-level/beginning social work practice and licensing. Further, pre-Masters students in their second year are slotted into the MA program which is designed for experienced social workers pursuing specialized studies. How *hasava* students with limited practice experience can slot into an advanced practice degree eluded the Committee.



The Committee could not glean from the self-evaluation study (1) the scope of the theses undertaken by MA thesis track students, (2) the principles/rationale informing the scope (whatever it may be) and (3) the means by which the theses are examined. It appears that the MA thesis track program allows a year for the completion of the thesis suggesting a thesis of considerable scope.

### Ph.D. Program

The School admits many students to the doctoral program (almost 20 a year). All students are approved and accepted by a faculty member who is willing to mentor them. While the self-report suggests that doctoral students are trained to be faculty members nationally and internationally the reality is somewhat different. Only a small number of students are planning on academic work while many plan to stay in the field. And those seeking an academic career have to contend with an over-supplied market in which competition for faculty positions is intense. This raises two critical issues: 1. The high burden of dissertation advising carried by faculty members; and 2. Academic preparation needed for those doctoral graduates that do not plan on an academic career.

Most doctoral students are not financially supported unless they happen to work on their mentor's funded project. Consequently, most doctoral students work full-time elsewhere and work on the dissertation in their free time which reduces their commitment to academic excellence. There is also no support for the doctoral students to enhance their academic future. For example, doctoral students do not get travel money to go to conferences and therefore do not present their work. Most students graduate the PhD program with zero, one or a maximum of two published/accepted articles. Finally, most doctoral students do not get a chance to teach a course and build their pedagogical skills.

PhD students complained that they have very little sense of community. They have very few courses and a regular seminar in the first year only (while work on their thesis proposal) where they meet. The rest of the time they are on their own.

### Direct track PhD and the PhD Program for those without a Degree in Social Work

The self-evaluation report (on page 39) makes no reference to practice experience as being a pre-requisite for admission to the direct track PhD program while the PhD program for those without a degree in social work by definition requires no professional practice experience. No rationale is provided for these two programs. On the face of it, they seem to be quite at odds with the mission of the School's PhD program.

It is of interest to note that at least one other Israeli university abandoned its direct track PhD as it produced young academics who, given a lack of professional practice experience, “floundered” in social work academia.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

##### BA & MA Programs

Reallocate resources in the MA program by having fewer specializations leading to smaller course sizes in this program and greater opportunities to expand the number of elective courses overall.

Address student difficulties in finding faculty to work with for the MA thesis track option by having fewer specializations in the MA program and, over time, greater concentration of faculty members in the remaining specializations. If students cannot be adequately supervised and supervision *guaranteed* to each student who enrolls in the thesis track, then the number of students admitted to the thesis track should be reduced accordingly.

Clarification is needed concerning the scope of MA theses, the principles/rationale informing the theses’ scope and the means by which theses are examined. The three year format of the MA thesis track program is at odds with the Bologna model of a two-year MA program. A justification for a three-year rather than two-year MA program needs to be made.

##### Ph.D. Program

Reduce the number of doctoral students admitted every year in order to ensure faculty supervision load is realistic and greater financial support can be offered to students.

Focus admission of doctoral students in areas of research undertaken by groups of faculty members to encourage opportunities for doctoral student interaction and support.

Greater structure is needed in PhD coursework to ensure that all students receive comprehensive methodological training. Advanced statistical courses should be required for all doctoral students whether they do quantitative or qualitative research. In addition, students not planning an academic career (and even those who are) would benefit from course content in leadership and the management of complex organizations.

#### **Advisable changes:**

## BA & MA Programs

Develop alternative teaching methodologies and student evaluation strategies to address large class sizes in the BA and MA programs (e.g., collaborative teaching co-teachers, use of Teaching Assistants, e-learning classes), mixed use of e-learning and on-site discussion sections, adjustments in class meeting times and hours (no change in overall number of hours per course rather how those hours are distributed—few individual sessions that are longer, allowing more small group discussions within large class sizes).

Develop student assessment/grading procedures in the BA and MA programs that “capture” the extent to which intended learning outcomes of both individual courses and the overall program have been achieved *and* which also provide for feedback from faculty on student performance instead of just relying solely on grades on multiple choice exams.

Develop a clear rationale for the purpose and role of the final Master’s Exam so it doesn’t merely re-assess knowledge that has already been assessed in individual courses.

Market the redesigned MA program to potential applicants to support reducing the total number of new students admitted to the clinical track in the MA program while increasing the number of students admitted to other tracks in the MA Program.

Clarification is needed concerning the scope of MA theses, the principles/rationale informing the theses’ scope and the means by which theses are examined. The three year format of the MA thesis track program is at odds with the Bologna model of a two-year MA program. A justification for a three-year rather than two-year MA program needs to be made.

Develop incentive mechanisms that reward faculty for supervising MA thesis students. Encourage group supervision where feasible to allow supervising faculty to receive course credit.

Review (1) the issue of a three-year *hasava* program when elsewhere in Israel a *hasva* program demands only two years of study and (2) how *hasava* students with limited practice experience can slot into an advanced practice MA degree.

## Ph.D. Program

We recommend an on-going seminar where research proposals and manuscripts for publication can be critiqued, where visiting scholars can present papers as a means to model cutting edge research, and where socialization to the role of post-doc/lecturer/assistant professor can be provided. This will also foster a greater sense of community among the doctoral students.

Consider the option of a dissertation structure to a number of publishable articles to address concern that students don't have enough opportunities for publication while a doctoral student and this would also help better qualify graduates for securing academic positions. Strongly encourage PhD students to publish "out of" their PhD research as they go along.

The Committee recognizes that union contracts make it difficult for doctoral students to teach courses. However, other opportunities to provide teaching experiences for doctoral student should be explored, e.g., guest lectureships, teaching mentorships to work with faculty in course planning, syllabus development, etc.

Develop opportunities, such as writing seminars, to increase the number of publications by doctoral students while they are in the doctoral program.

### **Desirable changes recommended:**

#### Direct Track Ph.D. Program

Given the lack of reference to practice experience as a pre-requisite for admission to the direct track PhD program in a professional school, the School should provide data concerning the success of its graduate in obtaining academic positions and advancing in their academic careers as compared with graduates of the traditional PhD program

### **4. Human Resources / Faculty**

The faculty is comprised of staff in three tracks: regular academic-research track, teachers and sessional/adjunct instructors who come in from the field. There are 29 full-time faculty members including 7 full professors, 9 associate professors, 7 senior lecturers, 6 lecturers, and 0 teachers in the teachers track. There are also 31 adjunct instructors.

Faculty members are diverse in terms research interests but they broadly coalesce across 7 research areas of primary interest. However, the School, being "top heavy" in terms of senior professors approaching retirement, is on the threshold of a significant generational shift. This shift will provide an opportunity for the School to reconsider its future vision and mission. Conversely, there is also a risk of faculty being hired based solely on their individual strengths without consideration to the strategic directions of the School. In addition, when faculty members retire, those

faculty positions revert to the Office of the Rector. The School of Social Work must strongly advocate to the Rector to fill vacant faculty positions.

Some early career faculty has recently been recruited but there appears to be a lack of depth in professional practice experience among some of them. This is a particular issue in relation to the teaching of practice courses/subjects by these young faculty members. While this situation is not unique to the University of Haifa, the eroding base in practice experience of young, new faculty members in a professional School should be viewed with great concern.

The Rector aspires to recruit all future entry-level academic staff who have practice experience, post-doctoral experience outside of Israel, and a proven “beginning-level” record of research and publication to “refresh” the School in terms of its person power. The university should encourage the further development of post-doctoral scholarships that allow a significant part of the post-doctoral period to be undertaken in Israel. This is of particular importance for female PhD graduates whose family responsibilities may obviate spending an extended period of time overseas.

While there is no formal mentoring program for early career faculty, the ad hoc mentoring that takes place has been well received by junior academic staff. Nevertheless, a formal mentoring program for early career faculty would ensure that individual faculty members do not inadvertently “fall through the cracks.”

The retention, job satisfaction, productivity and career path progression of faculty in the School of Social Work (and indeed the university more broadly) will require greater clarity than is currently the case regarding the explicit promotion criteria for each academic rank at the University of Haifa.

The level of administrative support available to the School appears to be adequate. However, administrative staff carry *very* heavy, seemingly excessive, workloads indicating under resourcing in this area.

As a large School with many programs and aspirations for still further expansion (e.g., an international PhD), the inadequacy of resources commensurate with the ongoing expansion means that workloads in terms of teaching and supervision are excessively high. Teaching commitment is 8 hours per week of teaching for full-time faculty members in the regular track, 12 hours per week in the expert track. For new faculty, 2 hours reduced teaching load is provided in the first year and recommended in the second year. High faculty workload has had very evident adverse implications for the quality of coursework content/assessment, the availability of supervisors for students undertaking a research thesis, and the research productivity of academic staff.

The Committee believes that, in order to obviate compromising the quality of its “bread and butter” programs (the BA, MA and PhD degrees), the School would do

well to carefully consider its priorities and ensure that any expansion into new ventures (e.g., the proposed international PhD and the fast track clinical social work doctoral program) is undertaken with appropriate resourcing and without further placing the academic excellence of existing offerings at risk.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

New ventures such as the proposed international PhD program and the fast track clinical social work program need be considered as part of the School's strategic vision to make sure that the School's limited resources are not overly stretched so as to negatively impact the quality of its existing BA, MA and Ph.D. programs.

Given the considerable number of senior faculty members that will be retiring in the next few years, the school needs to develop a strategic vision for its future concerning areas of strength and depth that it wants to have and hire *practice-experienced* new faculty that fit this vision.

#### **Advisable changes:**

Given the increasing number of junior faculty members that will be hired in the next few years, the School should formalize its mentoring support arrangements for junior faculty members.

Junior faculty should be advised as to explicit promotion criteria for each academic rank.

The university should encourage the further development of post-doctoral scholarships that allow a significant part of the post-doctoral period to be undertaken in Israel. This is of particular importance for female PhD graduates whose family responsibilities may obviate spending an extended period of time overseas.

## **5. Students**

BA students expressed some concerns about their academic program. The majority of the exams are multiple choice throughout their BA studies. Students believe that the exams are too easy. Current grading does not give students the opportunities to show what they have learned, to analyse different cases, or to express critical thinking.

The students we met with expressed concern about course content being detached from what's happening in Israeli society and felt that the School was only focusing on theoretical studies. Students also expressed some degree of dissatisfaction with the depth of their academic program, indicating that they felt that the course

content was superficial. Students also expressed a general concern about the adequacy of the depth of practice experience on the part of teachers who teach practice-related courses.

The Committee acknowledges the investment of the School in the development of courses in the practice of social work in diverse societies. At the same time however, there is some concern on the capacity of faculty to actively engage Arab and Ethiopian students in the classroom at the BA level.

There is an insufficient number of TAs in general and inadequate opportunities for PhD students to take on TA roles which would provide them with some experience in teaching.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

The School should ensure that all faculty members who teach practice courses have sufficient experience in practice and have ability to teach practice courses at a high level.

#### **Advisable changes:**

While the School has made efforts to include materials pertaining to social work practice in a diverse society in a number of courses, further efforts should be made to ensure that faculty are equipped with the knowledge and expertise to actively engage Arab and other minority students (e.g. Ethiopian) in classroom discussions. Indeed, the School should very seriously consider introducing a core course on social work *practice* in diverse societies.

The School should utilize a variety of grading mechanisms so as to better evaluate student's knowledge and critical thinking.

The School should provide more teaching opportunities for PhD students.

## **6. Teaching and Learning Outcomes**

The School has made a major contribution to the professional education and training of social workers serving the needs of the diverse population groups of northern Israel and enjoys an outstanding reputation in this regard. However, this reputation may be at risk. Ongoing resource constraints (e.g., the lack of TAs) have compromised the quality of the social work education enterprise at the University of Haifa. Thus, for example, large classroom sizes have affected the quality of the classroom experience from the perspectives of both instructors and students. The burden of grading student work when large student numbers are involved has meant that faculty members have resorted to simple, efficient means of assessment

(e.g., multiple choice questionnaires), approaches to assessment which demand neither a depth of engagement with the curriculum material on the part of the student and which also obviate the possibility of honing critical thinking and writing skills – key skills for professional social workers.

There remains some degree of overlap between select BA and MA subjects. Further, the relationship between some “foundation knowledge subjects” taught mainly in the first year and social work appears to elude some students.

A greater investment appears to be necessary in the articulation of (measureable) learning outcomes. These learning outcomes should be premised on a clear conception of the values, components (e.g., knowledge for practice, applying knowledge to practice, communication and interpersonal skills, etc.) and areas of practice (e.g., work with individuals families, groups, communities, social policy practice, management, leadership and administration, etc.) required for entry-level social work practice (BA) and advanced professional practice (MA). The discussion on learning outcomes in the self-evaluation report is much too broad-brush.

There is a severe shortage of thesis supervisors, a situation which requires (1) a greater investment in the formal training of especially younger academics in the thesis supervision process and (2) the explicit inclusion of thesis supervision as an integral part of a faculty member’s workload (*and* recognition of this role in promotion procedures).

While by no means unique to the University of Haifa, the average grades achieved by students are uniformly very high and the failure/exclusion rate on academic grounds is relatively low. This implies that the School is not performing its gatekeeping function in terms of admitting only competent and adequately prepared students to the social work profession. Further, the high grades awarded to students suggest that it must be quite challenging to distinguish among them in terms of their abilities/mastery of course content.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

Measureable learning outcomes for entry-level social work practice (BA) and advanced practice (MA) based on values, components and areas of practice need to be more fully and clearly articulated.

#### **Advisable changes:**

In order to address grade inflation, the School of Social Work should introduce a rigorous grading system.



The School should utilize a variety of assessment mechanisms so as to better evaluate student's knowledge and critical thinking. (This recommendation is also in the Student Section).

-

The School should provide more teaching opportunities for PhD students. (This recommendation is also in the Student Section).

## **7. Research**

The faculty's research is interdisciplinary, covers a wide range of research methodologies and focuses on many socially-pressing issues such as child abuse, trauma, aging, and health. Between 2009 and 2014, social work faculty members received approximately, \$3.3 million in external research grants which is a little less than the School reported in the previous evaluation. Faculty members receive no teaching load reductions from bringing in research grants and high teaching loads adversely affect research productivity.

From 2009 to 2014, the 29 faculty members of the School of Social Work published a total of 169 peer reviewed manuscripts in leading journals with impact factors of 1 and above (1.2 articles per faculty member per year). Faculty also published an additional 180 journal articles (1.2 articles per faculty member per year), six authored books, nine edited books, and 101 book chapters. The School has two research centers—The Center for Rehabilitation and Research, and the Center for Research and Study of the Family.

Of concern, the Committee was informed that while seed money for research was once available there is no longer such money available to faculty members. This is particularly significant for new faculty members who are hired and do not receive any start-up financial support.

There is no one at the School or Faculty level who assumes the responsibility of enhancing research and supporting grant applications. The Committee believes the School of Social Work would benefit from an appointment of an Associate Head of School in research similar to the effective model used at the Schools of Social Work in the United States.

The research of the School arguably spans too many areas. The research enterprise may be enhanced by focusing on a smaller, select numbers of research priority areas in which greater depth could be pursued. This is the sort of issue an Associate Head of School in research might "drive" in consultation with faculty members.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

The School should identify particular areas of research in which it wants to excel in the future and faculty hiring should be focused on the creation of groups of faculty in those areas of research expertise to foster faculty collaboration and enhance opportunities for MA theses and PhD dissertations to be focused in those areas as well.

#### **Advisable changes:**

The School should appoint a faculty member to foster the development of faculty and doctoral student research activities at the School and to provide support for these activities through formation of research groups, writing seminars, methodological seminars, etc. These activities should complement but not duplicate resources offered by the University Central Research Authority.

### **8. Infrastructure**

The current facilities for the School of Social Work are inadequate. There are not enough private offices for full-time faculty, only 24 private offices for 29 faculty members; all teaching fellows share a single office. The school does not have a conference room to hold meetings and events. The Committee was pleased to learn that the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences' new building will be completed in three years and will offer the opportunity for adequate space for the school of social work to address current unmet needs while also allowing for future growth.

#### Recommendations

#### **Essential changes required:**

The Rector and the Dean of the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences should invite the Head of the School of Social Work to be an active participant in ongoing planning meetings for the design and allocation of space in the new building of the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences in order to ensure that the new building's space is designed in an adequate fashion to meet the current and future needs of the School of Work and to create a sense of community.

### **9. Self-Evaluation Process**

The Committee has reviewed the self-study process the university conducted and found it to be thorough and completely satisfactory. The School of Social Work has a structured procedure for conducting timely self-evaluation processes; program committees at the School conduct annual overview and revision of the School's programs, examination of student teaching evaluations, and feedback from student

representatives. This Committee is highly appreciative of the work of the faculty and staff in the preparation of the self-study report.

#### **Chapter4: Summary of Recommendations and Timetable**

##### **Essential changes required:**

1. The School's mission statement should be revised to reflect its primary purpose of developing leading social work practitioners.

### BA & MA Programs

- a. Reallocate resources in the MA program by having fewer specializations leading to smaller course sizes in this program and greater opportunities to expand the number of elective courses overall.
- b. Address student difficulties in finding faculty to work with for the MA thesis track option by having fewer specializations in the MA program and, over time, greater concentration of faculty members in the remaining specializations. If students cannot be adequately supervised and supervision *guaranteed* to each student who enrolls in the thesis track, then the number of students admitted to the thesis track should be reduced accordingly.
- c. Clarification is needed concerning the scope of MA theses, the principles/rationale informing the theses' scope and the means by which theses are examined. The three year format of the MA thesis track program is at odds with the Bologna model of a two-year MA program. A justification for a three-year rather than two-year MA program needs to be made.

### Ph.D. Program

- d. Reduce the number of doctoral students admitted every year in order to ensure faculty supervision load is realistic and greater financial support can be offered to students.
- e. Focus admission of doctoral students in areas of research undertaken by groups of faculty members to encourage opportunities for doctoral student interaction and support.
- f. Greater structure is needed in PhD coursework to ensure that all students receive comprehensive methodological training. Advanced statistical courses should be required for all doctoral students whether they do quantitative or qualitative research. In addition, students not planning an academic career (and even those who are) would benefit from course content in leadership and the management of complex organizations.
- g. New ventures such as the proposed international PhD program and the fast track clinical social work program need be considered as part of the School's strategic vision to make sure that the School's limited

resources are not overly stretched so as to negatively impact the quality of its existing BA, MA and Ph.D. programs.

2. Given the considerable number of senior faculty members that will be retiring in the next few years, the school needs to develop a strategic vision for its future concerning areas of strength and depth that it wants to have and hire *practice-experienced* new faculty that fit this vision.
3. The School should ensure that all faculty members who teach practice courses have sufficient experience in practice and have ability to teach practice courses at a high level.
4. Measureable learning outcomes for entry-level social work practice (BA) and advanced practice (MA) based on values, components and areas of practice need to be more fully and clearly articulated.
5. The Rector and the Dean of the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences should invite the Head of the School of Social Work to be an active participant in ongoing planning meetings for the design and allocation of space in the new building of the Faculty of Welfare and Health Sciences in order to ensure that the new building's space is designed in an adequate fashion to meet the current and future needs of the School of Work and to create a sense of community.

**Advisable changes:**

6. BA & MA Programs
  - a. Develop alternative teaching methodologies and student evaluation strategies to address large class sizes in the BA and MA programs (e.g., collaborative teaching co-teachers, use of Teaching Assistants, e-learning classes), mixed use of e-learning and on-site discussion sections, adjustments in class meeting times and hours (no change in overall number of hours per course rather how those hours are distributed—few individual sessions that are longer, allowing more small group discussions within large class sizes).
  - b. Develop student assessment/grading procedures in the BA and MA programs that “capture” the extent to which intended learning outcomes of both individual courses and the overall program have been achieved *and* which also provide for feedback from faculty on student performance instead of just relying solely on grades on

multiple choice exams.

- c. Develop a clear rationale for the purpose and role of the final Master's Exam so it doesn't merely re-assess knowledge that has already been assessed in individual courses.
- d. Market the redesigned MA program to potential applicants to support reducing the total number of new students admitted to the clinical track in the MA program while increasing the number of students admitted to other tracks in the MA Program.
- e. Clarification is needed concerning the scope of MA theses, the principles/rationale informing the theses' scope and the means by which theses are examined. The three year format of the MA thesis track program is at odds with the Bologna model of a two-year MA program. A justification for a three-year rather than two-year MA program needs to be made.
- f. Develop incentive mechanisms that reward faculty for supervising MA thesis students. Encourage group supervision where feasible to allow supervising faculty to receive course credit.
- g. Review (1) the issue of a three-year *hasava* program when elsewhere in Israel a *hasva* program demands only two years of study and (2) how *hasava* students with limited practice experience can slot into an advanced practice MA degree.

## 7. Ph.D. Program

- a. We recommend an on-going seminar where research proposals and manuscripts for publication can be critiqued, where visiting scholars can present papers as a means to model cutting edge research, and where socialization to the role of post-doc/lecturer/assistant professor can be provided. This will also foster a greater sense of community among the doctoral students.
- b. Consider the option of a dissertation structure to a number of publishable articles to address concern that students don't have enough opportunities for publication while a doctoral student and this would also help better qualify graduates for securing academic positions. Strongly encourage PhD students to publish "out of" their PhD research as they go along.
- c. The Committee recognizes that union contracts make it difficult for doctoral students to teach courses. However, other opportunities to

provide teaching experiences for doctoral student should be explored, e.g., guest lectureships, teaching mentorships to work with faculty in course planning, syllabus development, etc.

- d. Develop opportunities, such as writing seminars, to increase the number of publications by doctoral students while they are in the doctoral program.
  - e. The School should identify particular areas of research in which it wants to excel in the future and faculty hiring should be focused on the creation of groups of faculty in those areas of research expertise to foster faculty collaboration and enhance opportunities for MA theses and PhD dissertations to be focused in those areas as well.
8. Given the increasing number of junior faculty members that will be hired in the next few years, the School should formalize its mentoring support arrangements for junior faculty members.
  9. Junior faculty should be advised as to explicit promotion criteria for each academic rank.
  10. The university should encourage the further development of post-doctoral scholarships that allow a significant part of the post-doctoral period to be undertaken in Israel. This is of particular importance for female PhD graduates whose family responsibilities may obviate spending an extended period of time overseas.
  11. While the School has made efforts to include materials pertaining to social work practice in a diverse society in a number of courses, further efforts should be made to ensure that faculty are equipped with the knowledge and expertise to actively engage Arab and other minority students (e.g. Ethiopian) in classroom discussions. Indeed, the School should very seriously consider introducing a core course on social work *practice* in diverse societies.
  12. The School should utilize a variety of grading mechanisms so as to better evaluate student's knowledge and critical thinking.
  13. The School should provide more teaching opportunities for PhD students.
  14. In order to address grade inflation, the School of Social Work should introduce a rigorous grading system.

15. The School should utilize a variety of assessment mechanisms so as to better evaluate student's knowledge and critical thinking. (This recommendation is also in the Student Section).
16. The School should provide more teaching opportunities for PhD students. (This recommendation is also in the Student Section).
17. The School should appoint a faculty member to foster the development of faculty and doctoral student research activities at the School and to provide support for these activities through formation of research groups, writing seminars, methodological seminars, etc. These activities should complement but not duplicate resources offered by the University Central Research Authority.

**Desirable changes recommended:**

Direct Track Ph.D. Program

18. Given the lack of reference to practice experience as a pre-requisite for admission to the direct track PhD program in a professional school, the School should provide data concerning the success of its graduate in obtaining academic positions and advancing in their academic careers as compared with graduates of the traditional PhD program



**Signed by:**



---

Prof. Allan Borowski



---

Prof. Ram Can'an



---

Prof. Michàlle Mor Barak



---

Prof. David Biegel



---

Prof. Zahava Solomon



or Sven Hesse, Stockholm University, Stockholm

---

Prof. Sven Hesse

**Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment**

February 2015

Prof. Allan Borowski  
School of Social Work  
RMIT University  
Australia

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 the Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **Social Work and Human services**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Michàlle Mor Barak, Prof. Ram Cnaan, Prof. David Biegel, Prof. Zahava Solomon and Prof. Sven Hesse

Ms. Alex Buslovich-Bilik 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,

Prof. Hagit Messer-Yaron  
Vice Chair,  
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

Enclosures: Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

**School of Social Work – Schedule of Site Visit**

**March 9, 2015**

**Monday, March 9, 2015**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Room/Location</b>
09:30-10:00	Opening session with the heads of the institution (Joint meeting of the two academic units under evaluation)	<b>Prof. David Faraggi</b> , Rector <b>Prof. Perla Werner</b> , Vice Rector <b>Ms. Ruchama Elad-Yarum</b> , Manager, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector <b>Dr. Michal Daloya</b> , Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
10:00-10:45	Meeting with the Dean of Faculty of Social Welfare & Health Sciences (Joint meeting of the two academic units under evaluation)	<b>Prof. Shay Linn</b> , Dean of the Faculty of Social Welfare & Health Sciences. <b>Ms. Tova Grimberg</b> , Head of Faculty Administration	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
10:45-11:30	Meeting with the head of the school of Social Work/head of the department of Human services	<b>Prof. Miri Cohen</b> , Head of the School of Social Work <b>Ms. Shoshi Mansfeld</b> , Administrator of the School of Social Work	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
11:30-12:15	Meeting with senior academic staff <b>with tenure</b> (representatives of relevant committees)*	<b>Prof. Amnon Boehm</b> – <i>Academic Chair of the Production Laboratory Research-Media- and Social Change</i> Community change, community climate, leadership, crisis and resilience. <b>Dr. Eli Buchbinder</b> - <i>Member of the MA Committee – Child &amp; Adolescent Area &amp; MA Supplementary Studies Program; Member of the BA Committee; Mediator.</i> Battered women, battered men, treatment of violence, clients' perceptions of social workers. <b>Prof. Zvi Eisikovits</b> - <i>Head PhD Program.</i> Sexual Abuse, Work effects on individuals. <b>Prof. Guy Enosh</b> – <i>Head, BA Program &amp; BA Special Program for Ultraorthodox Sector in MIVHAR. Academic Head of Field Unit; Member of the PHD Committee.</i> Interpersonal violence and work place <b>Dr. Anat Freund</b> - <i>Head, MA Special Program for Ultraorthodox Sector in MIVHAR; Member, MA Program.</i> Organizational social work, organizational behavior, team work in social work. <b>Dr. Sharon Gil</b> - <i>Head, MA Studies &amp; MA</i>	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712

Time	Subject	Participants	Room/Location
		<p><i>supplementary Studies.</i>            Psychotherapy, suicide, post-trauma  <b>Prof. Irit Hershkowitz</b> -            Physical and sexual violence in children,            memories of abuse, interview and            verbalization</p> <p><b>Prof. Arie Rimmerman</b> - <i>Richard Crossman            Chair for Social Welfare &amp; Planning; Member            of the PHD Committee.</i>            Social policy toward people with disabilities,            employment, social participation  <b>Prof. Eliezer Somer</b> - <i>Deputy Ombudsman            on Sexual Harassment, University of Haifa.</i>            Outcomes of trauma, children abuse and            rape.  <b>Dr. Roni Strier</b> - <i>Member, MA Committee,            Organization &amp; Management Area.</i>            Macro practice, policy practice, social            exclusion and poverty.  <b>Prof. Rivka Yahav</b> - <i>Head of the            Interdisciplinary Clinical Center in the            Faculty of Social Welfare &amp; Health Sciences at            the University of Haifa; Member of Students            with Special Needs Committee.</i>            Clinical social work, psychotherapy, child            (and fetus)-mother relations.</p>	
12:15-13:00	Meeting with senior academic staff <b><u>without tenure</u></b> (representatives of relevant committees)*	<p><b>Dr. Hisham Abu-Rayya</b> –            Child and adolescent development, faith and            mental health, mixed marriages  <b>Dr. Tal Araten-Bergman</b> - <i>Chair, Students            with Special Needs Committee.</i>            Quality of life, social participation, equality            and policy.  <b>Dr. Devorit Gilad</b> - Family and disability  <b>Dr. Maayan Lawental Schori</b> - <i>Member of            the MA Committee – Correction Area &amp; MA            Supplementary Studies Program; Member, BA            Committee.</i>            Psychoactive substances, treatment of            addictions, policy re addiction  <b>Dr. Michael Weinberg</b> – <i>Member of the MA            Committee –Trauma Area; Mediator.</i>            Post-trauma.  <b>Dr. Michal Soffer</b> – <i>Member, MA Committee-            Health &amp; Rehabilitation Area.</i>            Discrimination – disease and disabilities  <b>Dr. Michal Koreh</b> - Social policy, funding            and development of welfare state.  <b>Dr. Chaya Koren</b> – <i>Member, Committee for            Ethical Research with Human Participants</i>            Spousal relations, intergenerational            relations, grandparenthood.</p>	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712

Time	Subject	Participants	Room/Location
13:00-13:45	Lunch (Joint)		Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
13:45-14:30	Meeting with BA and MA students** (up to 12 students)	<p><b><u>BA students</u></b></p> <p><b>Ms. Dorin Barbi Libovich</b> (3<sup>rd</sup> year)  <b>Ms. Irin Hay</b> (2<sup>nd</sup> year)  <b>Mr. Guy Kunizher</b> (3<sup>rd</sup> year)  <b>Ms. Jeries Nawatha</b> (2<sup>nd</sup> year)  <b>Mr. Yoav Shadmy</b> (2<sup>nd</sup> year)  <b>Ms. Enas Shamali</b> (2<sup>nd</sup> year)  <b>Ms. Tova Tadese</b> (3<sup>rd</sup> year)</p> <p><b><u>MA students</u></b></p> <p><b>Ms. Inbal Dagan</b>, Clinical studies, MA Without Thesis, Premaster 2<sup>nd</sup> year.  <b>Ms. Hila Harel</b>, Clinical studies, MA Without Thesis, 2<sup>nd</sup> year.  <b>Ms. Nava Ney</b>, Trauma studies, MA With Thesis, Premaster 2<sup>nd</sup> year  <b>Ms. Sara Phishel Abadi</b>, Trauma studies, MA Without Thesis, 2<sup>nd</sup> year.  <b>Mr. Erez Pinzi</b>, Clinical studies, MA Without Thesis, 2<sup>nd</sup> year.  <b>Ms. Moran Tibi</b>, Clinical studies, MA Without Thesis, Premaster 2<sup>nd</sup> year.  <b>Ms. Iman Zoabi</b>, Health and rehabilitation studies, MA With Thesis, 1<sup>st</sup> year.</p>	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
14:30-15:15	Meeting with PhD students** and teaching assistants (up to 10 students)	<p><b><u>Teaching Assistants</u></b></p> <p><b>Ms. Libi Goldenberg</b>, Organization &amp; Management Studies, MA With Thesis, 1<sup>st</sup> year.  <b>Ms. Shani Yaakobi</b> - Clinical studies, MA With Thesis, 1<sup>st</sup> year</p> <p><b><u>PhD students</u></b></p> <p><b>Mr. Adir Adler</b>, Dissertation under review  <b>Ms. Ayelet Gur Shitrit</b>, , Dissertation under review  <b>Ms. Romain Jammal Abud</b>, 1<sup>st</sup> stage  <b>Mr. Aviv Landau</b>, 2<sup>nd</sup> stage  <b>Ms. Daniela Mazor</b>, Dissertation under review  <b>Ms. Hadassa Postan</b>, 2<sup>nd</sup> stage (Research Assistant)  <b>Ms. Yael Karni-Vizel</b>, 1<sup>st</sup> stage – (Research Assistant)  <b>Ms. Zohar Spivak Lavi</b>, Dissertation under review  <b>Ms. Ilanit Tuito</b>, 1<sup>st</sup> stage</p>	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712

Time	Subject	Participants	Room/Location
15:15-16:00	Meeting with Field Studies Unit – B.A & M.A	<b>Dr. Nava Arkin</b> - Field Studies Unit manager <b>Ms. Sophia Oria Binyamin</b> - Teaching Fellow A, Social Work Intervention Methods <b>Ms. Tami Handelman Ben Shimon</b> - coordinator pre master's, head of community development <b>Ms. Miriam Ben Oz</b> - Ma Practicum Coordinator <b>Ms. Hadass Dikman</b> -Coordinator projects and partnerships excluded populations <b>Dr. Gitit Harpak</b> - Coordinator- 3 <sup>rd</sup> year study center and Pre Ma study center <b>Ms. Galiya Pinus</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> year student)- Special Project in Field Work - N.G.O Organization in Policy Change. <b>Ms. Ahlam Aga Hatib</b> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year supervisor and first year group supervisor	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
16:00-16:15	Closed-door meeting of the committee		Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712
16:15-16:45	Summation meeting with heads of institution, Dean and head of the school (Joint meeting of the two academic units under evaluation)	<b>Prof. David Faraggi</b> , Rector <b>Prof. Perla Werner</b> , Vice Rector <b>Prof. Shay Linn</b> , Dean of the Faculty of Social Welfare & Health Sciences <b>Prof. Miri Cohen</b> , Head of the School of Social Work <b>Dr. Gil Luria</b> , Head of the Department of Human Resources <b>Dr. Iddo Gal</b> , Head of the Department of Human Resources during the self evaluation process <b>Ms. Ruchama Elad-Yarum</b> , Manager, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector <b>Dr. Michal Daloya</b> , Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation, Office of the Rector	Eshkol Tower 7th Floor Room 712

\* 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.

#### **Committee Members:**

- **Prof. Allan Borowski** – School of Social Work and Social Policy, La Trobe University ,Melbourne, Australia (Ageing; Retirement; Migration; Cohesion; Delinquency)

- **Prof. Michàlle Mor Barak** – School of Social Work & Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, USA (social work and management)
- **Prof. Ram Cnaan** – School of Policy and Practice, University of Pennsylvania, USA (faith based social services, social policy)
- **Prof. David Biegel** - Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, USA (family as a unit, family welfare)
- **Prof. Zahava Solomon** – School of Social Work, Tel-Aviv University, Israel (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and secondary PTSD)
- **Prof. Sven Hesse** – School of Social work, Stockholm University, Sweden (poverty and children and their families in an international perspective as well as International social work)

**CHE Representative:**

- **Ms. Alexandra Buslovich-Bilik** – Committee Coordinator