



Committee for the Evaluation of English Teacher Education Study Programs

Herzog Academic College of Education

Department of English

Evaluation Report

November 2017

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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. Malatesha Joshi**, Texas A&M, 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 served as the Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:¹

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).

¹ 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 Academic College of Education, Jerusalem College, Orot Israel Academic College of Education, 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.

This report deals with the Department of English Teacher Education at Herzog Academic College of Education. The Committee's visit to Herzog College took place on May 25, 2017.

Due to scheduling considerations, the committee split into two groups and held simultaneous visits in the institutions. The group which visited Herzog College was chaired by Professor Joshi, and included Professor Rivera, Professor Brutt-Griffler and Professor Spolsky.

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

The Committee thanks the management of the Herzog 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 Herzog 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

Herzog Academic College is an established religious academic institution that merged with Lifshitz College in 2014. The merger included eight campuses, which makes Herzog College one of the largest teacher training institutions in Israel. The multi-campus institution has the mission to train teachers to work in the national religious school system. It aims to cater to the ultra-orthodox population, whose members often have a limited English background.

The addition of a program preparing math teachers for religious education is not a problem, but adding an English program is a challenging matter because the students have little or no experience with English and may in fact oppose acquiring English proficiency. Also potentially problematic for this population of students is the use of female lecturers. While the use of female lecturers is largely a political issue, it also can be a matter affecting the quality of instruction, because most TESOL or TEFL professionals in Israel are women.

This report focuses exclusively on evaluation of the college's English program and is informed by the Herzog self-evaluation, the evaluation team's visit to the men's campus, interviews with administrators, faculty, students and alumni, and other relevant information provided to the Evaluation Committee.

The English department offers a traditional English curriculum that incorporates literature, linguistics and pedagogy. According to Herzog's self-evaluation, "The College aims to train excellent teachers who will be equipped to lead the educational system in the next generation." Acknowledging that the student English language background of students differs, the college's English program varies at different campuses.

The Evaluation Committee found substantial evidence that the English department continues to modify its curriculum and teaching practices to deliver a quality educational experience to students. For example, to support the development of English proficiency and to encourage students to declare English as a major, the college has established an innovative international exchange program.

By participating in this program students receive additional exposure to English and usually return to Israel with greater fluency in English, some English teaching experience, and are motivated to select English as a major.

However, the college does not provide a plan for how the department will ensure that native and non-native English speakers become “excellent” teachers of English in Israeli elementary and secondary secular and ultra-orthodox schools. The challenge for English teachers graduating from Herzog is that a majority of students they will encounter in elementary and secondary secular and ultra-orthodox schools are limited in English or have no English background at all.

Notable at the men’s campus visited by the Evaluation Committee were a well-kept facility; resources available to students; and 11 credentialed lecturers in the English department. These department staff members serve three campuses. Of note, only three lecturers in the English department have a specialization in teaching English as a second or foreign language. The small number of faculty members in the department with specialized training in teaching English as a second language or TESOL is a cause for concern.

The field of TESOL is a well-established academic and professional discipline, forming part of Educational Linguistics. Although the Herzog English department has three TESOL professionals, it became obvious to the Evaluation Committee that these faculty have limited influence over critical resources and policies that shape the curriculum, teaching practices and practice teaching. Thus, the small number of faculty in the department with specialized training in teaching English as a second language or TESOL is considered problematic.

The department provides in person and online courses to 3rd and 4th year students. While online courses such as Pedagogical Grammar and 21st Century Skills appear to meet student needs, the assessment and classroom management courses are not considered effective. Graduates of Herzog also expressed that they were not well prepared to implement and maintain classroom discipline in their first year of teaching. Thus, the evaluation team recommends that the online courses be carefully reviewed for relevancy. Whether offered online or in person, classroom management courses need to emphasize classroom management techniques and issues related to maintaining discipline in an English language classroom. The ineffectiveness of online courses may be topic-specific and in part due to the lack of focus on issues related to teaching English as a second language in the Israeli context.

Another area of concern is the students' practical experiences in schools, including student observations, teacher practicum and student teaching. Currently, classroom teachers with expertise in TESOL or TEFL are currently not matched to students when students are sent out to conduct classroom observations, to do their practicum in schools and to conduct student teaching. This is an important issue since Herzog students are to become teachers of English, mainly to students whose first language is not English. Additionally, during the practicum students may not be provided with sufficient exposure to the routines of the school or classroom to adequately experience the sequence of teaching and learning. Practicum students are charged with preparing and delivering a lesson after which they leave the school. This gives the student a limited view of how transitions are made and overall of how a classroom/ school fully functions. Recognizing the difficulty of identifying classroom teachers with TESOL background, the Committee supports recruiting alumnae who are teaching. Importantly, the college informally surveys current and former students. This network can help expand the selection of practicum and student teaching mentors who are currently teaching English to students from non-native English speaking backgrounds.

While, the English department does not have a strategic plan for growth, it nonetheless envisions an increase in the number of students over the next five years. The college would like to manage growth so that it can maintain the personal familial relationship it currently has, where alumnae feel comfortable returning and being mentored.

Proactively, the College leadership is establishing an evaluation unit that will take on the function of collecting systematic data to understand how well the college is fulfilling its mission of preparing students to work in English classrooms. These data will enable the College to provide feedback to faculty and to identify what program and curricular changes may be needed to increase the quality of the English program.

The recommendations in this report propose substantial ways to improve the English program and are grounded by the data provided in Herzog's self-study, other documentation provided by the College, and information gained through observations, interviews and discussions with administrators, faculty, students and alumni. The Evaluation Committee constructed the recommendations considering these data inputs with the intention of signaling ways the College and the English department can strengthen the English program.

Overall, the evaluation team concluded that while the English department's program provides adequate preparation for successful beginning teaching, there is need for improvement in three areas: (1) Study program; (2) Human resources/faculty; and (3) Infrastructure.

2. Study Program/ Teaching and Learning

Observations and findings:

The role of ESOL/TEFL in the English department

The field of TESOL is an established academic and professional discipline, forming part of educational linguistics. Given the nature of the English department structure in the college, the current curricular emphasis is on the teaching of literature. However, considering the minimal English proficiency of many students enrolled in the English department and the goal for these students to teach English in elementary and secondary schools to students who are non-native English speakers, there is a need to place a greater emphasis on the discipline of teaching English as a second language or foreign language (TESOL/TEFL). The challenge for the college is to help students reach advanced English proficiency as well as to prepare these students to teach English as a second language to students who are non-native English speakers in elementary and secondary schools. For students who come to the program English-proficient, the emphasis on TESOL/TEFL methodology is also important. These future teachers are also preparing to teach in the Israeli education system where they will encounter many non-native English speakers in the process of acquiring English.

Curriculum and instruction that support development of English language proficiency

The English program includes literature, linguistics and pedagogy. Since the development of advanced English language proficiency is of critical importance for many students, the department is aware of the need to provide opportunities for students to practice English. Toward this end, the college offers mixed classes of native and non-native English speakers. This practice provides a good source of language input for students at lower levels of English proficiency. In addition, mixed classes demonstrate to the native speaker of English the issues that non-native English speakers have in acquiring English and that they will need to address when teaching. Although mixed classes may partially ameliorate the proficiency gap,

advancing English proficiency nonetheless continues to be a problematic issue that the college should address by providing additional courses that allow students needing to do so practice and advance their English proficiency.

The innovative pilot program with North America is important because it supports students' acquisition of English proficiency and may motivate more students to elect English as a major.

Online courses

The department offers several online courses as part of the curriculum. Feedback from different sources suggests that some courses are not very successful. While online courses such as Pedagogical Grammar and 21st Century Skills appear to meet student needs, the assessment and classroom management courses are not considered effective. These courses would benefit greatly from the input of trained TESOL professionals.

Majors

The College requires English majors to declare a second major in addition to English. However, requiring students to declare two majors is not necessarily advantageous considering that the goal at Herzog is for students to acquire advanced proficiency in English. Having two majors creates an excuse for students to depend on Hebrew rather than English and to choose to write seminar papers in Hebrew rather than in English. The Committee collected evidence during the campus interviews that they are not fully meeting the needs to the students who are preparing to be English teachers. At this moment it is not clear whether it is the system of delivery (online) or the contents of the course that seem to be not fully meeting the expectations of the students. The Committee learned that the College asked CHE about the option of allowing a single major; the Department did not understand that single majors were possible.

Practical training

There are issues with the identification of practicum schools, mentor teachers, and opportunities for Herzog students to gain a clear understanding of teaching and learning. For example, the evidence suggests that the Academia Kita Practicum model in its current structure is problematic. The English Department had two recent experiences with the model – one good and one not so good. In current practice, the Ministry of Education selects the participating practicum schools. The College places students in the schools regardless of mentor teacher's

background, interest in mentoring, or expertise in TESOL/TEFL techniques. This can make the mentoring experience for aspiring teachers from the English program unsatisfactory. In the case designated as “not so good”, students received limited mentoring from the mentor teachers.

Classroom observations in English classrooms begin after the methodology course is completed. However, in the opinion of the Evaluation Committee, allowing students to observe classrooms prior to completing the methods course would give them a clearer appreciation of teaching and learning. In past years, the practice workshop was part of the curriculum. However, the practice workshop is sometimes not implemented because it does not fit within the schedule.

The practical training as currently structured does not provide student teachers the opportunity to understand the sequence of interconnecting lessons. Currently student teachers teach one hour one day per week and do not have the opportunity to observe how the classroom teacher builds on what was taught and how lessons are interconnected. Thus, the pedagogical training unduly emphasizes the mastery of lesson planning but not understanding a lesson sequence in the context of the larger curriculum.

For the retraining program, the practicum for the junior high school occurs in the second semester. However, the second semester is interrupted by multiple holidays so student teachers do not gain the full benefit of student teaching.

Alumni are a potential source of mentor teachers. However, the department does not have a system for maintaining contact with alumni and a system for establishing mentor teacher relationships.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
The role of ESOL/TEFL in the English department	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The English department’s focus on TESOL should be strengthened, by recruiting faculty with TESOL preparation. These faculty should be allowed to develop courses that support students who are in the process of gaining proficiency in English so they can teach English in Israeli schools. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A TESOL specialization should be created that complements the current focus on literature and that has administrative recognition at the same level as Special Education. 	Important

Curriculum and Instruction that support development of English language proficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An additional oral proficiency course for Israeli non-English background students should be added. The committee recommends that the college request CHE to provide additional funding for the additional course, as needed. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most proficient and native English speakers should be allowed to take advanced course(s) while non-native English speakers take advanced oral proficiency course(s) needed to improve English proficiency. 	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the pilot study abroad program should be continued. The Ministry of Education should be encouraged to expand student fellowships under this program. 	Desirable
Online Courses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should be surveyed in order to assess which online courses are effective, meet the learning objectives of the program, and support student progress through the program. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online courses with the input of TESOL professionals should be designed. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online courses should be made interactive and include theory, practice, and implementation strategies that apply to classrooms where English is taught as a second language. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the classroom management course, students should be provided with the opportunity to role-play implementation strategies related to classroom discipline and management issues relevant to classrooms where students are in the process of becoming English proficient. 	Desirable
Major	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The option of a single major should be offered, especially for students planning to teach at the secondary level. This choice would encourage English majors to practice English in all aspects of their program. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentives for English majors to write seminar papers in English should be provided. 	Important
Practical training	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure of the Academia Kita Practicum model should be reconsidered. The English department should confer with the Ministry of Education to make needed adjustments to the 	<i>Essential</i>

selection of schools and mentor teachers.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom observations should be offered before students begin their practicum in Year 2, in the same semester during which students take methods course. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The College/English department should take responsibility for identifying, selecting, and coordinating mentor teachers and schools because the effectiveness of practice teaching depends on qualified mentor teachers. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practice workshop should be reinstated considering its importance in providing students with useful feedback. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student teachers should be allowed to spend a full week in the classroom/school so they have a more hands-on classroom experience over a period of time. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student teachers should be allowed to work in the same school for a semester to allow them to gain greater understanding of teaching and a deeper connection with students. 	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms to maintain contact with alumni should be established in order to help identify model teachers and mentors. Alumni should be engaged formally and systematically to create a larger pool of mentor teachers that have TESOL training. 	Desirable

3. Human Resources/Faculty

Observations and findings

Policies for supporting faculty research

Faculty are encouraged to conduct research. However, the College does not have a clearly articulated policy for faculty to gain support to carry out research.

Student dismissal policy

The pedagogical instructors do not secure placements for students who are not English proficient. However, the College/English department does not have a method to dismiss a student who does not acquire sufficient English to be placed in student teaching. Rather, students are “maintained” in the academic program until they have sufficient English skills to work in schools.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
Policies for supporting faculty research	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The criteria for supporting faculty research should be clearly articulated and communicated to the faculty in a written policy. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty should be encouraged to conduct research that relates to their practice. 	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty scholarship should be recognized by, for example, providing financial support to faculty to attend professional meetings where they present their work. 	Desirable
Student dismissal policy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A written policy that states clear criteria for dismissing students who do not acquire sufficient English proficiency to be placed in student teaching and/or who do not perform well as student teachers should be established. 	Important

4. Infrastructure

Observations and findings

The department has set up an English Language Teaching (ELT) resource center to aid students in language development and practice. Through the center faculty are expected to work with students on all areas of need (e.g., lesson planning). However, the center is in its infancy and the effectiveness of resources available and the type and effect of faculty support offered need to be carefully monitored and refined.

<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
Create a TESOL Resource Center parallel to the ELT resource center	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource center should be equipped with key journals in the field of teaching English as a second language- e.g. Applied Linguistics, TESOL Quarterly etc. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Software that supports opportunities to advance the oral proficiency of non-native English speakers in the department should be identified and made available to the resource center. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A language lab like setting for use of equipment should be provided. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development should be provided to teachers so they become familiar with the resources of the center and have knowledge about how to help students access the resources. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A process for monitoring the effectiveness of the center for students should be established. 	Important

Chapter 4: Summary of Recommendations

Essential

- An additional oral proficiency course for Israeli non-English background students should be added. The committee recommends that the college request CHE to provide additional funding for the additional course, as needed.
- Students should be surveyed in order to assess which online courses are effective, meet the learning objectives of the program, and support student progress through the program.
- The option of a single major should be offered, especially for students planning to teach at the secondary level. This choice would encourage English majors to practice English in all aspects of their program.
- The structure of the Academia Kita Practicum model should be reconsidered. The English department should confer with the Ministry of Education to make needed adjustments to the selection of schools and mentor teachers.
- Classroom observations should be offered before students begin their practicum in Year 2, in the same semester during which students take methods course.
- The resource center should be equipped with key journals in the field of teaching English as a second language– e.g. Applied Linguistics, TESOL Quarterly etc.

Important

- The English department's focus on TESOL should be strengthened, by recruiting faculty with TESOL preparation. These faculty should be allowed to develop courses that support students who are in the process of gaining proficiency in English so they can teach English in Israeli schools.
- A TESOL specialization should be created that complements the current focus on literature and that has administrative recognition at the same level as Special Education.
- Online courses with the input of TESOL professionals should be designed.
- Online courses should be made interactive and include theory, practice, and implementation strategies that apply to classrooms where English is taught as a second language.
- Incentives for English majors to write seminar papers in English should be provided.

- The College/English department should take responsibility for identifying, selecting, and coordinating mentor teachers and schools because the effectiveness of practice teaching depends on qualified mentor teachers.
- The practice workshop should be reinstated considering its importance in providing students with useful feedback.
- Student teachers should be allowed to spend a full week of time in the classroom/school so they have a more hands-on classroom experience over a period of time.
- The criteria for supporting faculty research should be clearly articulated and communicated to the faculty in a written policy.
- A written policy that states clear criteria for dismissing students who do not acquire sufficient English proficiency to be placed in student teaching and/or who do not perform well as student teachers should be established.
- Software that supports opportunities to advance the oral proficiency of non-native English speakers in the department should be identified and made available to the resource center.
- A language lab like setting for use of equipment should be provided.
- Professional development should be provided to teachers so they become familiar with the resources of the center and have knowledge about how to help students access the resources.
- A process for monitoring the effectiveness of the center for students should be established.

Desirable

- Most proficient and native English speakers should be allowed to take advanced course(s) while non-native English speakers take advanced oral proficiency course(s) needed to improve English proficiency.
- Support for the pilot study abroad program should be continued. The Ministry of Education should be encouraged to expand student fellowships under this program.
- For the classroom management course, students should be provided with the opportunity to role-play implementation strategies related to classroom discipline and management issues relevant to classrooms where students are in the process of becoming English proficient.
- Student teachers should be allowed to work in the same school for a semester to allow them to gain greater understanding of teaching and a deeper connection with students.
- Mechanisms to maintain contact with alumni should be established in order to help identify model teachers and mentors. Alumni should be engaged

formally and systematically to create a larger pool of mentor teachers that have TESOL training.

- Faculty should be encouraged to conduct research that relates to their practice.
- Faculty scholarship should be recognized by, for example, providing financial support to faculty to attend professional meetings where they present their work.

Signed by:



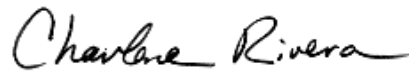
Prof. Claude Goldenberg
Committee Chair



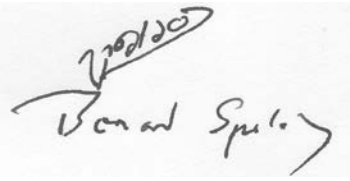
Prof. R. Malatesha (Malt) Joshi
Committee Co-chair



Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler



Prof. Charlene Rivera



Prof. Bernard Spolsky

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, CHE
Ms. Maria Levinson-Or, Committee Coordinator

Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule

<u>English Teacher Education - Schedule of site visit</u> <u>Herzog College</u>		
25.05.17 – location: boardroom, ground floor		
09:00-09:45	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Rav Dr. Yehuda Brandes, Dr. Ezra Kahalani, Dr. Avichai Kellerman, Rav Dr. Shuki Reis, Dr. Yoav Barzilai
09:45-10:30	Meeting with the Head of the Study program	Dr. Lindsey Shapiro-Steinberg
10:30-10:40	Break	
10:40-11:25	Meeting with senior academic staff *	Mrs. Janet Kupietzky, Dr. Shulamit Kopeolevitch, Mr. Avraham Roos, Dr. Tanya Ben Shitrit, Dr. Shana Maur
11:25-12:40	Meeting with pedagogical instructors*	Mrs. Janet Kupietzky, Mrs. Susan Strikovsky, Mrs. Gilly Solomon, Mrs. Leora Rodrig
12:40-13:25	Open slot	Tour of library Tour of college resource centers Exhibition of student work
13:25-14:15	Lunch (in the same room)	Closed-door meeting of the committee
14:15-15:00	Meeting with B.Ed. students**	
15:00-15:45	Meeting with Alumni**	
15:45-16:05	Closed-door meeting of the committee	
16:05-16:30	Closing meeting with the heads of the institutions and the head of the study program	Rav Prof. Yehuda Brandes, Dr. Ezra Kahalani, Dr. Avichai Kellerman, Rav. Dr. Shuki Reiss, Dr. Yoav Barzilai, Dr. Lindsey Shapiro-Steinberg, Mrs. Janet Kupietzky