



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

The College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education

Department of English

Evaluation Report

April 2018

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Chapter 1: Background

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

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

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

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

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to: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 College of Education, Jerusalem College, Orot College, Kaye Academic College of Education, and Herzog College. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

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

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

This report deals with the Department of English Teacher Education at the College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education. The Committee's visit to Sakhnin took place on December 5, 2017.

Due to scheduling considerations, the committee split into two groups and held simultaneous visits in the institutions. The group that visited the College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education was chaired by Professor Goldenberg, and included Professor Rivera, Professor Ur and Professor Wirth-Nesher.

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

The Committee thanks the management of the College of Sakhnin for Teacher 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 the College of Sakhnin for Teacher 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

The vision of the College of Sakhnin is to support high standards and bring about educational, social, and cultural change within the Arab population it serves. More specifically, it sees itself as working towards broadening educational opportunities for Arab women in the north of Israel and promoting a social and cultural dialogue between the different communities within the country – and beyond it, through its various international projects. The College has a dual age-track program that supports students preparing to be English teachers in elementary and secondary schools. Many of its graduates, even if they cannot immediately find jobs as English teachers, continue to Master's degrees in literature, linguistics and education at university.

The Committee was impressed by the expressed vision, sense of mission, enthusiasm, purpose and commitment of senior faculty and administrators, teachers, students and graduates. We noted numerous positive qualities. These include a tangible sense of collaboration and teamwork among faculty, as well as an excellent relationship between faculty and students and alumni, who feel comfortable requesting support even after they graduate. The lecturers are highly qualified and motivated. Moreover, both lecturers and students emphasized clear links between rigorous theoretical courses and classroom practice. The pedagogical advisors are knowledgeable in their field and, importantly, have extensive experience teaching within the Israeli education system. Within the teacher preparation program, we noted with approval that the pedagogical advisors not only visit students twice a week but also conduct workshops with them; and that there is consistent coordination between coursework and its application in the practicum.

The College faces some important challenges. For example, it will need to plan how to maintain the number of qualified teaching faculty, the quality of instruction, and the rigor of the curriculum as senior faculty retire. A second major challenge is rooted in the fact that English is often the fourth language students learn in school, and because of limited opportunities to encounter English outside the classroom, many incoming students have a relatively low level of English. This is a challenge that may be addressed in several ways. See below.

The syllabi are comprehensive and clear, with a systematic and consistent layout. There is an unusually high-level, wide-ranging and rigorous program in linguistics. The English department courses are given in English, whereas general education courses are given in Hebrew or Arabic.

The library provides congenial surroundings for quiet study; books are readily available on the shelves, as are a selection of periodicals. New books are purchased for lecturers who request them for new courses.

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

2. Study Program

Observations and findings

Overall Curriculum

Recognizing that the challenge for students to become English proficient is greater for some students than for others, there is recognition of the need to find opportunities to provide additional input and practice for these students.

Courses outside of the English department are normally offered only in Hebrew or Arabic. There is a need for more courses in English, outside of the English department, to provide students with extended exposure to academic English.

English Proficiency

There is a recognition within the College that for many students the entry level of their English is relatively low, largely because many of the students are acquiring English as a third or fourth language. Moreover, within their communities, students do not often come in contact with English speakers.

The department does not have a systematic way of assessing students' level of English proficiency at different stages of the program including at entry and prior to being cleared for student teaching. Assessing proficiency at different stages of the program is needed to motivate students to work harder to reach higher levels of proficiency and to ensure students' English proficiency is of an appropriate level once they are at the stage of becoming student teachers.

There is no systematic adjustment to the plan of study when students are struggling to improve their level of English proficiency. While the availability of tutors is laudable, there is a need to monitor students' acquisition of English proficiency carefully during the program and make adjustments to individual student's coursework to ensure that each student has the opportunity to achieve an acceptable level needed to begin student teaching. The amount of instruction in oral and written proficiency courses at present may be insufficient; and it is important to make sure that the number of students in an oral proficiency course is limited.

There was discussion of the need to establish a language laboratory to supplement course work. While creating opportunities to practice English is critical, a language lab, in our opinion, is not a requisite for this purpose.

Pedagogy

Topics offered and their graduation from first to second year are not always systematic. For example, more advanced and specific topics such as 'alternative assessment' and fringe methods such as 'suggestopedia' should not be included in initial courses, whereas guidance on general assessment and testing should be. In some courses there is overlap and redundancy of topics. For example, the national English curriculum is taught in three courses. Some essential topics may be missing; for example, there is no extensive coverage of practical guidelines for the teaching of early reading and writing in English.

Reference to articles in key English teaching journals were missing, indicating that students are not being exposed to the latest research and thinking related to the teaching of English.

Practicum

Some of Sakhnin's students participate in Academia Kita for their practicum in the third year of the program. Although being in schools three days per week is appropriate and even ideal, some practical experience in schools is needed at least in the second year; and it is desirable to offer some observation in the first. When practical training is delayed, application of what is learned in the methodology courses is more difficult.

Literature

The College offers an admirable range of literature courses, including historical surveys, genre (poetry, short fiction, novel, drama, children's stories), and theory (critical approaches) and pays attention to minority writers as well as canonical figures. However, women authors, contemporary writers, and international English writers beyond the US and the UK are not well-represented in the syllabi.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/Important/ Desirable</u>
Overall Curriculum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The College should make every effort to teach required general education courses in English to strengthen students' opportunity to practice and use English. 	Desirable
English Proficiency	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of students' English proficiency at entry, before beginning practice teaching and at exit should be monitored and assessed. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' ability to use English in their teaching should be assessed as part of the routine monitoring procedures implemented during student teaching by pedagogical advisors. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of students taught in an oral proficiency course should not exceed 20. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors should encourage students to use extracurricular resources to improve their levels of English. This will probably require training of faculty in order to support such learning. 	Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department should offer supplementary oral and writing proficiency classes for students who require additional support prior to beginning practice teaching. 	Desirable
Pedagogy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The department should plan courses on English teaching methods so that there is clear progression from the more basic, essential topics in earlier courses to the more advanced ones later. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecturers should coordinate courses to make sure all essential topics are covered and that there is no unnecessary repetition of content in different courses. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecturers and practical advisors' teaching methods courses should require students to read articles in key English teaching journals to expose them to practices and methods being used generally in the field of TESOL. 	Important
Practicum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students should be provided with teaching experience at least from the second year; it should not be delayed to the third. 	<i>Essential</i>
Literature	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature courses should reflect English as an international language and, in addition to US and UK authors, include English-language authors outside of the traditional US/UK canon. 	<i>Essential</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature courses should include more women writers, and not limit their writing to poetry. This is particularly true for the 	Important

Introduction to Literature and the surveys on American and British literature.	
• Literature courses should include more contemporary writers.	Desirable

3. Faculty/Human Resources

Observations and findings

There is at present no systematic procedure in place for the induction of new teaching faculty. The College provides some support for research and grants for faculty members to attend conferences, but teachers do not seem to avail themselves of these very often because they do not know such support is available or are not encouraged to apply.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
• New members of staff should be provided with support in the shape of a mentor and some counseling or initial study-days.	Important
• Time should be set aside for teacher-development study-days, lectures or workshops, timed so that as many faculty members as possible can participate.	Important
• Faculty should be made aware of resources available for research and travel to conferences. The College should publish clear guidelines, and promote them to encourage teachers to take advantage of all the available resources.	Important

4. Infrastructure

Observations and findings

In the library, we found that some books are not available in their latest editions, and there are no online subscriptions to key journals for English teachers that provide full-text access.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/Important/Desirable</u>
• Books that are required reading for courses should be available in their latest editions in the library.	<i>Essential</i>
• The library should take out online subscriptions to key journals for English teachers that include full-text access. These should include <i>ELT Journal</i> , <i>TESOL Journal</i> , <i>Language Teaching</i> , <i>English Teaching Professional</i> , <i>The English Teaching Forum</i> .	Important

5. Alumni

Observations and findings

There is no systematic effort on the part of the college to maintain contact with program alumni. Alumni could be an excellent resource for locating cooperating teachers, suitable schools to place students, and providing feedback for program improvement.

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Essential/Important/ Desirable</u>
• There should be systematic efforts to make and maintain connections with program alumni.	Important

Chapter 4 – Summary of Recommendations

Essential:

- The level of students' English proficiency at entry, before beginning practice teaching and at exit should be monitored and assessed.
- The department should plan courses on English teaching methods so that there is clear progression from the more basic, essential topics in earlier courses to the more advanced ones later.
- Lecturers should coordinate courses to make sure all essential topics are covered and that there is no unnecessary repetition of content in different courses.
- All students should be provided with teaching experience at least from the second year; it should not be delayed to the third.
- Literature courses should reflect English as an international language and, in addition to US and UK authors, include English-language authors outside of the traditional US/UK canon.
- Books that are required reading for courses should be available in their latest editions in the library.

Important:

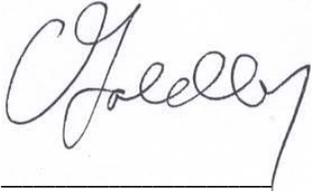
- Students' ability to use English in their teaching should be assessed as part of the routine monitoring procedures implemented during student teaching by pedagogical advisors.
- The number of students taught in an oral proficiency course should not exceed 20.
- Instructors should encourage students to use extracurricular resources to improve their levels of English. This will require some training of faculty in order to support such learning.
- Lecturers and practical advisors' teaching methods courses should require students to read articles in key English teaching journals to expose them to practices and methods being used generally in the field of TESOL.
- Literature courses should include more women writers, and not limit their writing to poetry. This is particularly true for the Introduction to Literature and the surveys on American and British literature.
- New members of staff should be provided with support in the shape of a mentor and some counseling or initial study-days.
- Time should be set aside for teacher-development study-days, lectures or workshops, timed so that as many faculty members as possible can participate.

- Faculty should be made aware of resources available for research and travel to conferences. The College should publish clear guidelines, and promote them to encourage teachers to take advantage of all the available resources.
- The library should take out online subscriptions to key journals for English teachers that include full-text access. These should include *ELT Journal*, *TESOL Journal*, *Language Teaching*, *English Teaching Professional*, *The English Teaching Forum*.
- There should be systematic efforts to make and maintain connections with program alumni.

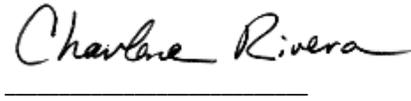
Desirable

- The College should make every effort to teach required general education courses in English to strengthen students' opportunity to practice and use English.
- The department should offer supplementary oral and writing proficiency classes for students who require additional support prior to beginning practice teaching.
- Literature courses should include more contemporary writers.

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claude Goldenberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

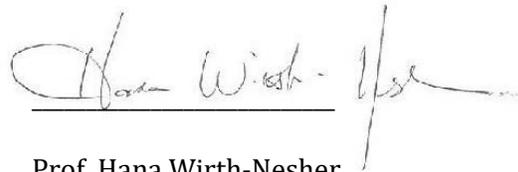
Prof. Claude Goldenberg - Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlene Rivera". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Prof. Charlene Rivera

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Penny Ur". The signature is written in a cursive style. The text is highlighted with a light yellow background.

Prof. Penny Ur

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hana Wirth-Nesher". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Prof. Hana Wirth-Nesher

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.

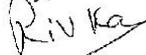
It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **English Teacher Education**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Janina Brutt-Griffler, prof. 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>The College of Sakhnin for Teacher Education</u>		
<u>December 5th, 2017</u>		
09:00-09:45	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Professor Mahmoud Khalil; Mr Nazeeh Badarneh; Dr. Mohammad Ibdah; Dr. Yasser Awwad and Dr. Zaher Acceryya.
09:45-10:30	Meeting with the Head of the Study program	Dr. Jamal Assadi (current head) Dr. Manal Yazbak (former head; during the period to which the report refers)
10:30-10:45	Break	Closed-door meeting of the committee
10:45-11:30	Meeting with senior academic staff * (up to 8)	Dr. Miriam Mbarki; Hala Irshaid; Jonathan Margalit; Eyad Malouf; Dr. Helen Paloge and Professor William Freedman.
11:30-12:15	Meeting with pedagogical instructors* (up to 8)	Dr. Tareq Murad; Lina Hashoul; Dr. Rawia Hayek; Ahmad Zidan; Fatena Awwad; Salah Foqara and Lamees Bsheer.
12:15-13:00	Lunch (in the same room)	Closed-door meeting of the committee
13:00-13:45	Tour of library	Khair Dallahseh.
13:45-14:30	Meeting with B.Ed students** (up to 6)	
14:30-15:15	Meeting with Alumni** (up to 6)	
15:15-15:35	Closed-door meeting of the committee	
15:35-16:00	Closing meeting	Professor Mahmoud Khalil; Dr. Mohammad Ibdah; Dr. Yasser Awwad; Dr. Zaher Acceryya; Dr. Jamal Assadi; Dr. Manal Yazback and Dr. Tareq Murad.