

24 March 2019

Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem

## **Visual Communication Department Quality Assurance Report**

### **Response and Implementation**

The Visual Communication Department, and the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem, wish to express their gratitude and appreciation to the committee for the evaluation of visual communications study programs in Israel, for the extensive, detailed and honest evaluation report, and its recognition of the department's rigorous self evaluation process, engagement, accomplishments and vision.

Listed herein are detailed responses to the Committee's recommendations:

#### **1. Essential**

##### **1.1 Learning Outcomes**

Map the LO's of the entire curriculum at each key stage of students' progression to better construct overarching thematic curriculum goals.

The VC Department stated its commitment to map the program's numerous LO's at the Committee's visit, and steps to formulate the curriculum map are already underway.

A faculty member will be assigned to mapping the curriculum by May 2019.

A format capable of continuously representing the program's future development will be developed by October 2019.

LO's collected from updated and vetted syllabuses (see 1.3) are expected to be mapped, representing the academic program of 2020-21, by June 2020.

##### **1.2 Assessment Criteria**

Define and document consistent assessment criteria and an assessment framework for the program as a whole at each key stage of the student's progression and accompany the numerical grades by written evaluations.

Assessment criteria and documentation framework is an institutional as well as a departmental task. The VC department recognises the need for a thorough reform of the assessment framework.

The departmental pedagogical committee, accompanied by the Center of Teaching Development at Bezalel, has started research and review of various international frameworks, with the goal of developing a methodology that supports assessment, evaluation and grading in the broad arts and design academic and pedagogical context.

The department is scheduled to revise the framework by October 2020, to be implemented in the academic program of 2020-21.

### **1.3 Syllabuses**

Audit and vet syllabuses to ensure that a consistent and comprehensive format is implemented.

The VC department SE report had initiated a fundamental revision of the syllabuses format and content.

2019 will end with a deeper review of the syllabuses and meticulous definition of course programs and LOs.

The revisited syllabuses are the departmental academic database, for the curriculum map (1.1), as well as pedagogical coordination and progression.

Audited by the heads of disciplinary studies and the department head, all program's syllabuses will be vetted by October 2019, for the academic year 2019-20 and onward.

### **1.4 Increase Full-time faculty**

Bolster the full-time faculty cohort and increase the percentage of time that faculty are on campus.

While the department intends to support its increased student growth with new faculty positions, keeping its student to faculty ratio, building a full-time faculty cohort requires a revision of the departmental curriculum, structure and infrastructures.

Present institutional infrastructures are leaned towards teaching - faculty members are expected to teach when on campus, most are employed half-time, and limited support is offered for administrative duties, both in said employment structure and physical infrastructures, such as offices and working spaces.

Coinciding with the institutional declared aspiration to examine its faculty employment policy, and increase faculty presence on campus, the department will appoint a committee, chaired by the department Head, to outline plans for a departmental structural revision, to be presented by October 2020.

### **1.5 Supporting Student Progression**

Implement an advising framework to support each student as they progress through the academic program.

A departmental committee will be assigned to formulate an academic advising support framework by august 2019.

Implementation will follow in 2020.

## **2. Important**

### **2.1 QA Process**

Take ownership of embedding the CHE QA framework within the institution on a regular basis and lead the implementation of the CHE QA process into the Department.

The institute is regarding the CHE QA process as a principal framework for self evaluation. In effect, the process has proved to be positively critical, inspiring knowledge and self improvement.

The QA process and report were presented at the departmental pedagogical committee and at the institutional department heads' forum, inspiring initiation of self evaluation in departments that otherwise will not be evaluated by the CHE.

The institute is exploring embedding a QA framework, in line with the CHE expressed goal of institutes taking ownership of the process. Resources need to be allocated for internal institutional and departmental QA frameworks.

### **2.2 Diversity**

Step-up diversity initiatives to include under-represented groups in students, faculty and staff and tailor support for the student experience to the specific needs of all ethnic groups in order to ensure successful completion of the academic program.

Bezalel and the VC department are set to pioneer inclusion of under-represented groups, and had proved to lead in implementing support for diversity.

In 2019, the first arabic VC lecturer for a core graphic design course was recruited, and saw an increase in arabic students application and admission.

The institute and the VC department will continue to support the complex diversity of LGBTQ genders, ethnicities and faiths. It will also cooperate with the newly founded Excellence centers for the youth, located in the southern periphery and in the arab society, aiming to perfectly mirror the diversity of the Israeli society in the students body by 2030, and strengthen diversity within the visual communication community that will lead to diverse social and genderial representation in future faculty.

### **2.3 Faculty Professional Development**

Carry out plans for clear faculty hiring and promotion procedures as outlined on page 3 of the SE Report: "A well-organized mechanism regulating lecturer promotions must be in place, including a measurable multiannual program and agreed-upon criteria for promotion or termination."

The VC department will promote the research, formulation and implementation of a professional development mechanism by 2022, in collaboration with the institutional HR office and the academic appointments committee.

#### **2.4 Research**

Establish clear guidelines on criteria for research in VC and mentor lecturers in this development. Provide an institutional infrastructure that will train and support the enhancement of research and its impact on communities outside the institution.

Bezalel's Research Center, Teaching Center, the Department of Visual and Material Culture and the VC department have already started to outline and establish practice-based and practice-led research frameworks for students and faculty of the graduate and undergraduate programs - through international exchange, seminars, conventions and capacity building collaborations.

The VC undergraduate program curriculum will launch a research-oriented elective course in 2019-20.

The VC department will appoint a coordinator to the institutional research center by June 2019.

The department is pursuing the establishment of an international consortium for peer-reviewed VC visual essays and pictorials, supporting a convention and publication, by 2022.

### **3. Desirable**

#### **3.1 National and International Collaboration**

Continue to expand the range of possibilities for national and international collaboration.

The VC department's extensive international collaboration will continue, with the annual international workshops week, and increasing lectures, seminars, and faculty and students exchange.

The students exchange program has expanded by 25% since the 2018 fall semester.

The VC department initiated an international annual gaming convention in Jerusalem, a collaboration with the Jerusalem Development Authority and industry leaders, launching in May 2019.

The department has started initiating regular and ongoing research capacity-building collaborations.

#### **3.1 Alumni Relations**

Create institutional channels and actions for developing alumni relations.

The institute has launched an alumni web platform in 2018.

The department will bolster informal alumni relations through its growing social media channels. An institutional social media manager was enrolled in 2019, and the VC department has allocated funds for student management of its social media activity.

The Visual Communication Department at Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem is looking forward to implementing the QA report recommendations, and continue the process of self evaluation and critical reflection, in order to maintain its heritage, its vision, and its leadership in the field of arts and design academics.

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President

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