COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS IN ISRAEL

July 2022

Section 1: Background and Procedures

1.1 In the academic year 2021-2022, the Council for Higher Education [CHE] put in place arrangements for the evaluation of study programs in the field of Communication in Israel.

1.2 The Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] participating in the evaluation process were:
- Ariel University
- College of Management
- Emek Yezre'el Academic College
- Hadassah Academic College
- The Hebrew University
- Kinneret Academic College
- Netanya Academic College
- Reichman University
- Sapir Academic College
- Tel Aviv University

1.3 To undertake the evaluation, the Vice-Chair of the CHE appointed an International Quality Assurance Review Committee [EC; 'the evaluation committee'], under the auspices of the CHE's Committee for the Evaluation of Communication in Israel[1], consisting of:
- **Prof. Patricia Moy** – Department of Communication, University of Washington, USA; *Committee Chair*
- **Prof. Andrea Hickerson** – College of Information and Communications, University of South Carolina, USA
- **Prof. María Len-Ríos** – Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, USA
- **Prof. Richard Ling** – School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- **Prof. Karen Ross** – School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle University, UK

  Prof. Gabriel Weimann – Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy, Reichman University, Israel

Ms. Anat Haina served as the Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

---

[1] The committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

1

1.4 The evaluation process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (January 2020). Within this framework the evaluation committee was required to:

- examine the self-evaluation reports submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Communication;

- conduct on-site visits at those institutions participating in the evaluation process (the visit to the College of Management was conducted on 27.03.2022);

- submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the academic units and study programs participating in the evaluation;

- set out the committee's findings and recommendations for each study program; and

- submit to the CHE a general report regarding the evaluated field of study within the Israeli system of higher education, including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

1.5 The evaluation committee examined only the evidence provided by each participating institution and considered it alongside the distinctive mission set out by each institution in terms of its own aims and objectives. This material was further elaborated and explained in discussions with senior management, faculty members, students, and alumni during the course of each one-day visit to each of the institutions.

1.6 In undertaking this work, the evaluation committee considered matters of both quality assurance and quality enhancement. It applied its collective knowledge of developments and good practices in the delivery of higher education in communication (mainly from European countries and from the USA) to the evaluation of such provision in Israel.

1.7 This report deals with the School of Media Studies in the College of Management. The institution was evaluated by Prof. María Len-Ríos, Prof. Richard Ling, and Prof. Gabriel Weimann.

The EC would like to thank the management of the School of Media Studies for its self-evaluation report, supportive interactions with the evaluation committee in the course of the evaluation process, and hospitality towards the committee members who visited the institution.

Executive Summary

This report is based on data submitted to CHE in the self-evaluation report prepared by the School, and the site visit carried out by the evaluation committee on 27 March 2022. During that visit, the evaluation committee met with the university leadership, the head of the School, full-time and adjunct faculty, BA students, and alumni. The team also was given a tour of the campus.

The School of Media Studies at the College of Management is a dynamic professional-oriented program that is the largest program of its kind in Israel. There is a professional and valuable symbiotic relationship between the school and the media industry. Over the years, the School has built a strong alumni base that provides it access to desirable media training sites for its students, which serves to further attract students to its programs. Students and alumni are proud to be associated with the program, and believe that the program prepared them well for their careers in marketing, public relations, advertising, and entertainment media. Students understand the value of theory to practice and express satisfaction with their studies.

Notwithstanding the School's success for students, its achievement in developing students into media professionals is at the expense of the development of academic research, and the careers and research accomplishments of the faculty. Thus, the conditions under which the School fulfills its mission are concerning. Despite the dedication and excellence of the core faculty members, they are working in conditions that stretch their talents too far and ask them to sacrifice their own career advancement in order to serve the School. The School should be investing in the core faculty to help them develop professionally and to realize higher ranks within the academy. When research is required for promotion, the policies currently set up prevent faculty from advancing in their positions by placing too demanding a teaching and service load on them. The disproportionate weight placed on teaching and heavy service leaves the core faculty in an extremely untenable position.

What is tragic, is that this information was presented to the College in the 2009 report and nothing was done. We recommend that the CHE follow up on this within three months to determine whether the College of Management has developed a plan with achievable milestones that will improve the conditions for faculty within two years. If conditions are not improved, it is a question as to whether there is sufficient academic faculty to support a BA program rather than simply a certificate. We also recommend that the School fix these problems with the BA before the School moves forward with an MA.

The evaluation committee noted that the President and Provost said that research will be a strong emphasis of the College moving forward. Israel is home to two of the top 50 communication research institutions of higher education in the world. It would be in line with the national ethos to be a part of this illustrious group of researchers.

The School has laid out plans to internationalize the curriculum with its Go Global program. This is a good direction for the School and we encourage this along with enhancing the core curriculum and readings to be presented to students in English.

Section 3: **Observations**

3.1 The Institution

The College of Management Academic Studies, founded in 1978, has the honor of being the first non-budgeted private college in Israel. It now offers its 7,500 undergraduate and graduate students access to more than 50 academic programs. Its campus is located in Rishon LeZion. The institution employs about 1,000 full-time and adjunct faculty.

3.2 Internal Quality Assurance

According to the self-evaluation report, the College of Management's Center for Academic Excellence has the responsibilities of quality assurance for teaching and research. The development of the internal evaluation examined here was coordinated by the Dean in concert with the heads of the teaching authority and the research authority, who are ultimately responsible.

The self-evaluation report was extensive, but in some cases it was incomplete, e.g., some CVs included only the name of the individual added to an empty template.

The previous evaluation of the School of Media Studies included recommendations regarding quality-assurance issues (pp. 10-11). These recommendations were largely ignored by the institution. This is seen particularly vis-à-vis the very small permanent faculty who are asked to do research, but must balance this against the large number of students. The evaluation committee has noted several major issues that need to be addressed by the School and by the College. While we do not recommend closing the program, a suspension of the program is recommended if the outlined recommendations are not implemented.

3.3 Parent Unit

There is no parent unit.

3.4 Study program

The College of Management Academic Studies' School of Media Studies focuses on the practical education of undergraduate students and prepares them for careers in the media industries. The School averages an enrollment of about 550 students, and

in our meetings, communicated that it has approximately 7,500 alumni. In fact, this is the largest department of communication in Israel in terms of BA students. At the beginning of their program, students select one of two tracks: the Advertising and Marketing track, or the Content Development, Production, and Creation track. The two tracks for undergraduate degrees are both conducted over three years. The emphasis of the program is on student experience and preparation for the workforce. The School has a relatively small academic faculty group supported by a large corps of adjunct faculty who provide the numerous workshops offered to students.

Both degree tracks require some core courses that provide a crucial academic and theoretical background. These include courses in theory; history; journalism fundamentals; persuasive communication; introduction to media content; and two courses on academic writing. They immerse the students in the essential orientation needed for the field of study. In some ways, this reflects a common core curriculum that is used in many media studies programs internationally.

The mission of the School as stated in the self-evaluation report (p. 16) is to:

1. Play a central role in the professionalization of the field of communication in the country."
2. "To set the professional training in a larger context and provide the industry with graduates with the highest level of theoretical background, critical thinking capabilities, and the broadest intellectual horizons."

The observation of the evaluation committee was that the School is succeeding well in the first part of its mission and partially so in its second mission. The committee identified a disconnect between the proportion of theory-based courses and the number of faculty available to deliver this content.

During the site visit, the committee met with the President and Rector, who were relatively new in their positions. They noted that the College had the ambition to provide more support for the research enterprise. In terms of supporting the School of Media Studies, research support is critical for the faculty to deliver fully in meeting its mission on point 2. If a larger proportion of the courses are theoretical, there is the need to have a faculty versed in theory to teach the classes. Adding full-time faculty who have a background in theory and research, perhaps along with some practical experience, would seem to be a necessary condition to fully meet the mission statement.

The School is currently in the process of writing a new strategic plan (due May 1, 2022) for the College leadership. The evaluation committee was told that the School is thinking about "renewing" the two tracks to "Advertising & High Tech Marketing" and "Content Creation/Digital." These changes are designed to take into account the ways digital technologies are modifying the landscape of the career fields. In moving in this

direction, the School should ensure these changes are grounded in research about market needs and not added in an ad-hoc fashion to sound relevant.

In discussions with students and alumni, the evaluation committee received positive feedback about the curriculum. Students felt they were getting an up-to-date curriculum and that the theory aided them in critical thinking and seeing the larger picture of the field.

During the visit, the Dean noted the desire to update the study program to include a greater focus on digital technologies. The committee was not provided with any evidence of planned changes, or that the working of the curriculum committee was used to systematically connect an update focus of digital technologies this coursework with to the current coursework. The evaluation committee would encourage the School to reflect on the process and to ensure it is strategically planned.

3.4.1 Training

Beyond the core courses, there are particular courses directed at the two tracks. In addition to these foundational courses, students enroll in mandatory workshops in their second year, and end their studies by taking practicums, electives, and engaging in a final project that is practically oriented and requires the application of knowledge from their foundational courses. This curriculum is augmented by students taking mandatory unpaid (or sometimes paid) internships and engaging in faculty-led events such as hackathons.

The self-evaluation report lists numerous media agencies and organizations where students complete their practical training, yet no numbers were provided about how many students participated at each work site. Nonetheless, the worksites include some of the major employers for the discipline (e.g., advertising agencies Gitam BBDO, Gitam Porter Novelli, and Tel-Aviv McCann). Students told the evaluation committee their internships were valuable as they often led to permanent jobs even before graduation.

3.4.2 Internationalization

While internationalization was mentioned in the self-evaluation report, it was discussed in terms of developing courses in English to prepare students for a media career, as well as hosting international students. The self-evaluation report cited an international partnership with Hong Kong Baptist University, although it was not clear whether this partnership involved collaborations relevant to teaching, research, or both (p. 38). Within the last year and a half, there has been a new head of Internationalization, whom the evaluation committee met. There was also a discussion of starting the Go Global track in 2022-23 in the self-evaluation report and during the visit, yet concrete details were not provided. The self-evaluation report noted the purpose of the Go Global track will provide students with interdisciplinary

courses and "advanced English to gain the knowledge and skills to compete in a global job market" (p. 37). According to the self-evaluation, there were no listed partnerships for students studying abroad or studying at the College of Management (p. 38).

The self-evaluation report noted that English-language courses had been added. However, it appears that the years lost to COVID put a damper on moving some of these internationalization efforts forward. The committee would highly encourage the School to consider how it could further internationalize the curriculum by connecting with alumni who work in international settings and leveraging their experiences in the classroom. Also, as evidence of internationalization that could be provided in the review, the School could point to examples from the curriculum and coursework where they have provided students with international experiences. Since this was during the pandemic, the programs were done virtually with, for example, the University of Moscow (page 56 of the self-evaluation report).

3.5 Teaching and Learning outcomes

3.5.1 Teaching

Instruction is the core focus of the School of Media Studies. The students and alumni have positive things to say about the instructors and course content. The core faculty have a heavy teaching load, with four to six courses a semester. This is on top of interviewing student applicants.

During the site visit, the leadership and faculty noted that the purpose of the program was to provide students with a practical orientation and employability, while also being innovative with their work in teaching technologies. The evaluation committee was told during the visit that the courses are continually updated based on feedback received from industry partners, faculty, and students. At the end of the semester the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning deploys electronic surveys of students. The surveys ask close-ended questions about two main areas: (1) the course and (2) the instructor. The Dean meets with those instructors who receive low scores or student complaints and puts together strategies for remediation. Instructors who receive high scores are recognized by a letter from the rector. Top teachers in every school are identified and receive cash awards.

For the most part, the faculty displayed great dedication to their students. They showed concern for ensuring that they provide students with relevant and useful material to help students in their future careers. Faculty also indicated they aspire to teach their students to become critical consumers of media content. This is listed as a learning outcome of the students' theoretical studies. Some students and alumni indicated that syllabi and the content of the classes should be updated regularly.

The School and College provide annual teaching awards to the faculty who excel in teaching. They are recognized by the School for their teaching achievements.

3.5.2 Learning outcomes

The School noted that it has oriented the syllabi to include learning outcomes, which is important for the students to understand the orientation of the course. The learning outcomes for the students depending on their years in the programs, and these are tied to the specific tracks as well. For both tracks, the practicums and final projects emphasize the practical development of producing professional materials that could be used by industry, but are also based on understanding concepts and principles related to creative strategy and storytelling.

A major emphasis of learning outcomes focuses on whether students get jobs (see, for example, page 16 of the self-evaluation report). The School works closely with the College's Career Center. In addition, adjuncts with professional connections as well as core faculty often provide internship and job opportunities for students. Students noted they often got jobs from their internships. That is, the students reported that the internships prepare them well for practical work, and that they get the required skills for getting jobs in various media outlets.

Student learning is evaluated through student projects and papers more than exams and quizzes. Looking at final grade distributions, the number of students who achieve 91-95 as final grades has gone down, as has the number of students who achieve below 75. A majority of students tend to earn grades between the 86-90 mark.

The syllabi provided to the evaluation committee were predominantly templates and not fully developed. This was a weakness in the self-evaluation report. There was no sense as to what occurred in the courses. The faculty use Moodle, so it may be that more fully developed syllabi are provided there.

3.6 Students

3.6.1 Admission and graduation

As a private college that relies on student tuition, admissions are important. The School operates admissions by conducting personal interviews with all candidates. This means between 200 to 275 students are interviewed every year by the Dean and core faculty. This serves, currently, as a sorting process to help the students determine the major in which they will enroll. This process allows the faculty to determine whether applicants are well matched for their major interest area. It needs to be noted, however, that this is yet an additional layer of administrative work for the small core faculty.

Students admitted to the School have average or below-average psychometric scores. A majority of students who apply to the program are accepted. For instance, in 2016/17, based on the self-evaluation report, 90% of applicants were admitted. These numbers were even higher in 2017/18 (96% admitted) and 2018/19 (97% admitted). This high admission rate suggests that there is little competition for admission. Further, from the data provided in the self-evaluation report (the averages of psychometric and matriculation grades), it seems not all students meet the required admission criteria. Regardless, the self-evaluation report hardly reports of any "on probation" students. This can suggest that the School seeks quantity over quality in admissions. The evaluation committee noted that the dropout rate was low. Most students who start the program stay committed to the program, even as most of them work. Tuition is also a major investment of resources for the students. The low dropout rate is evidence of the faculty's efforts to create a nurturing, supportive, and student-centered environment for the students.

3.6.2 Graduate students

The School of Media Studies does not have a graduate program. There is a discussion of starting an MA program, but this is in the future. Due to the lack of full-time tenured faculty and a lack of those who currently have doctoral degrees among the faculty, it is questionable whether there is sufficient credentialed personnel to support such a program at this time. The evaluation committee did not see a proposal for this new program.

3.6.3 Student support services

The evaluation committee was given a tour of the campus that included, among other things, visits to the Student Union, Student Services (The Dean of Student Services), and a Career Advisory Center.

The evaluation committee met with the representatives of the Student Union. Students mentioned that the Student Union was strong and that they regularly engaged with it to help solve problems on campus. Among other things, the representatives of the Student Union said they helped socialize students through activities during the COVID era. Senior administrators appeared engaged with the Student Union, and noted that they had regular interaction with it.

The Dean of Students office has dedicated staff to assist students who have learning as well as physical and psychological disabilities. In addition, this office supports pregnant students, those who need to fulfill their military reserve duties, and Israeli athletes who competed in major international sports events.

The students also have access to a Career Advisory Center that helps them transition from college to more permanent jobs. The Center sponsors a job fair and cultivates contact with businesses that will eventually hire graduates.

Another function of student services is administration of financial support. Students were offered financial assistance through the standard mechanisms including no-interest loans.

3.6.4 Alumni

The committee met with alumni from the School of Media Studies. The group was uniform in their praise of the School. They mentioned the "personal touch," the practical education, and the "sense of family" associated with the program as excellent. The alumni were happy with the internship program since it allowed them an opportunity to work in commercial settings and eventually transition into jobs at the same locations. The alumni praised the School for assisting them in the transition into the working world. They thought that the practical dimensions of their education were valuable in this.

In some cases, alumni had established their own companies and hosted interns from the School. There were also situations where alumni had been given access to the television recording studios of the School and, as a result of operating in the school, students had the opportunity to serve as interns on projects. Thus, there was a strong sense of synergy between the alumni and the School in that the alumni often work with the current students in, for example, the internship programs.

There is some contact among the alumni via Facebook and WhatsApp groups, though there is no formal alumni outreach network. Considering the talents and placements of many of the School's alumni, the College might consider assisting the School in creating a staff position for outreach, as this could be highly beneficial to formally manage an alumni network.

3.7 Human Resources

The program is currently practically oriented, focusing on professional, hands-on, market-oriented courses. This affects the structure of the faculty with a heavy emphasis given to adjuncts and professionals (contracted for 9 months). Yet, as the self-evaluation report declares (p. 62), there are core faculty, recruited for 12 months who are expected to do "active research and 16 hours of teaching" (divided into 8 hours each semester).

For an academic program, there is certainly a problem with the academic human resources allocation. Currently, there are only four academic senior lecturers, and no professors or associate professors. Over the past few years, no new faculty have been recruited. At the same time, some faculty have retired or moved to other colleges. Further, many of the most senior faculty will retire in the near future. This raises serious concerns about the strength of academic teaching and the ability to produce academic research. From their self-evaluation report, the School seems to rely on a large corps of teachers. According to the CVs delivered with the self-evaluation report,

about a third of the teaching faculty of the 66 individuals did not list a degree or listed a BA degree as their terminal degree. Another 50% had an MA or a Master of Fine Arts as their terminal degree.

During the site visit, a faculty member noted the heavy teaching load being borne by a "too-small group of core faculty." According to the self-evaluation (page 62), the full-time regular track individuals teach 16 hours a semester (usually 8 hours per semester). Full-time faculty have 12 hours of teaching but this can be expanded to 24 hours per year. Further, the faculty member noted that there are too few researchers, and that they have no research groups or teams to work with or to exchange knowledge about new research in the field.

While almost the entire faculty consists of adjuncts and professionals from the communication industries (more than 60 compared to four core academic faculty members), approximately three-quarters of the courses are theoretical.

The heavy teaching and recruiting load and the paucity of core academic scholars have resulted in a culture that does not support academic research. The committee heard that faculty are not encouraged to do research, and not rewarded or evaluated for their research productivity and publications. Further, there was no evidence of mentorship for the core lecturers, and no process for periodic academic evaluation of research and publication.

The self-evaluation report (p. 40) noted that the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning offers various workshops and seminars on improving teaching quality, syllabus planning, student assessment, etc.

The evaluation committee was impressed with the skills and the variety of the practical teachers, adjunct lecturers, and teaching fellows (various labels used in the self-evaluation report). This is indeed impressive in the face of the heavy administrative load borne by faculty members, many of whom are only paid only 9 months a year. When reviewing the report and recommendations of the 2009 evaluation, it is alarming to see that the same concerns regarding faculty hiring and theory courses have largely gone unaddressed over the interlude. The ratio of senior faculty to students in 2009 was 1 to 145, and senior faculty to adjunct was 1 to 17. Today it is about the same or worse, with the coming retirement of three core faculty members. With the retirement of one faculty member, the ratio would be 1 to 162 students (3.5 faculty to 570 students).

The committee read and heard about future plans for recruitment, but similar plans were also made after the former report. The evaluation committee sincerely hopes that the College's administration will heed the call to provide more senior academic positions for the School of Media Studies.

Bottom line: The School of Media Studies at the College of Management needs to make a fundamental decision. It needs to make the choice between being a school that produces academic research or being a school that focuses on producing students. If the former, then the School will need to change its faculty ratios, improve its academic resources, support academic and research, provide mentorship, and allocate resources for these.

3.8 Diversity

The committee had the impression that there is no clear policy or formal procedures to ensure or promote diversity. This was echoed in the self-evaluation report that stated, "no special policy exists regarding women and minorities at the College" (p. 74). Nevertheless, because of the lure of getting a job, the students come from diverse social strata including low-income families, Arab students, and new immigrants (Ethiopian Jews). Moreover, there is a program in the College for Ultra-Orthodox students on a separate campus, where men and women are taught separately.

3.9 Research

The team evaluated the research output for the School of Media Studies at the College of Management. This was done by examining the CVs in the self-evaluation report and examining the work of the faculty.

The previous evaluation report of the program in 2009 noted that little research was taking place at the School of Media Studies at the College of Management. Analysis of Google Scholar shows there are few faculty members who have been actively publishing. Further, there is little evidence of other scholars citing the faculty's publications. The previous evaluation report recommended that this be an area of focus for the School in the coming years. This idea was also expressed in the most recent self-evaluation report (p. 11). In the interim, the 2009 recommendation has not been fulfilled, and there is still little research being carried out at the School of Media Studies.

According to the current self-evaluation report, the School's objectives include the encouragement of faculty to "engage in research both individually and collaboratively" (p. 4). The self-evaluation report discusses the annual meetings between the Dean and core faculty to elaborate on this work (p. 9), and discusses the Teaching and Research Authority (Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning), which provides funds for researchers to attend international conferences and which informs faculty regarding research funding opportunities (p. 63). The self-evaluation report also notes that the School supports researchers with modest funds (p. 64).

The self-evaluation report also discusses the work of the college's Teaching and Research Authority (p. 63, 76-78). This office is mandated to disseminate knowledge regarding competitive research grants; to offer faculty who have received external

funding a reduced teaching load; to support travel to international conferences; and to mentor younger faculty.

While there is a stated interest in doing more research, the discussions during the site visit indicated that the teaching load and administrative work prevented this.

When asked, however, there was no indication of common research interests or foci. There was not a strong ethic of doing research among the faculty. Further, there was not a critical mass of work by the faculty in any particular research area. Rather, research was seen as an individual exercise. There were no well-understood norms of academic production (e.g., the number of peer-reviewed papers to be published per year).

Many part-time faculty were not scholars and so there was no institutional expectation that they should conduct research, although several had PhDs and an interest in pursuing research. The School's policy regarding research support was not well understood among the part-time faculty who were on a more academic trajectory, e.g., how mentoring functions or the process by which college-level funding can be secured. This group felt the lack of a school-level research ethos.

As noted on p. 82 of the self-evaluation report, there are no research laboratories or centers, and "the School has a very limited research budget" (p. 78). Thus, it is not surprising to find that the academic faculty members do not apply for and receive grants and produce a very small number of publications.

As faculty promotion is based on research, the lack of mentorship and evaluation can hinder professional performance. The heavy practical orientation also affects the resources available for researchers. There was no indication the Teaching and Research Authority's services include scientific editing, translation, seed money for research, etc., which will contribute greatly to the research productivity.

3.10 Infrastructure and Facilities

The tour of the campus included the facilities of the School of Media Studies and the library. The students at The College of Management have a well-run and well-equipped campus. They have access to an excellent library, and impressive facilities e.g., practical labs for radio, TV, podcasts, studios, auditorium, and computer labs.

The School of Media Studies at the College of Management has invested in advanced technical infrastructure for the benefit of the students, and the broader college community. The School has an advanced broadcast studio, a studio for the production of podcasts, and a studio for the production of online teaching videos.

These facilities were available to students, but they were also made available to other commercial groups who could use them while also mentoring students. The studio for

the production of online teaching material was used by the whole college. This was an increasingly important function during the recent pandemic.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the positive side, there is a strong focus on practical instruction. This is the core focus of the School of Media Studies. The students and alumni are very satisfied with the instructors and course content. Further, the evaluation committee was impressed by the infrastructure, the campus, and especially by the facilities provided. The career-oriented training provided by the School is successful in terms of students and graduates finding jobs in media, advertising, PR, production, and other communication industries.

There are, however, several issues that the evaluation committee needs to point out. First, there is a problem with the academic human resources allocation. There are only four academic senior lecturers, but no professors or associate professors. There further is a strenuous workload shouldered by faculty members who, besides teaching, provide personal one-on-one interactions with students, admissions interviews, special events such as hackathons, etc. The ratio between senior faculty to students, or senior faculty to adjunct, is very high, and upcoming retirements place the academic dimension of the program in a critical state.

Faculty are not supported for their research work, core lecturers are not mentored, and no process for periodic academic evaluation of research and publications exists. Also, the syllabi presented for review to the committee in the self-evaluation report were predominately templates and not all fully developed. This was also the case with several of the CVs provided. This speaks to poor quality control in the development of the document. Finally, there is no clear policy or formal procedures to ensure diversity or an application of criteria to promote diversity.

Past recommendations, from the previous evaluation round (2009), noted the low number of faculty members, and the little research taking place in the School. As a response, the College of Management stated that some actions will be taken, but there was no indication of implementation. Revisiting the issues at present raises the question as to whether there is sufficient academic activity to support a BA program.

4.1 Recommendations

A decision should be made whether this School will focus only on practical professional training or foster an academic program. If it is the latter, it will require major changes in faculty ratios, improvement of academic human resources, support of academic and research, academic mentorship, and allocation of resources for these purposes. The current blend of mostly practical training does not meet academic standards. Rather,

there is the profile of a professional, specialized school. The evaluation committee does not see the current academic level (and trajectory) of the School as being suitable for the proposed graduate program.

Essential

The College should decide on the fundamental purpose of the School: Is it to be a practical training school or is it to be an academic program? After this decision is made, the School and the College will have to change faculty ratios (i.e., the percent of the faculty who have a PhD), the focus of the faculty, and the apportionment of resources accordingly.

The School, in coordination with the College administration, should develop a hiring plan of permanent faculty. Revisit the unimplemented recommendations from 2009, specifically those regarding lack of core academic faculty, high ratio of senior faculty to students, and adjunct faculty teaching theory courses.

The CHE should follow up on this process within three months, to determine whether College of Management has developed a plan with achievable milestones that will improve the conditions for faculty within two years. If conditions are not improved, it is a question as to whether there is sufficient academic faculty to support a BA program rather than simply a certificate.

It is also recommended that the School fix the problems of core faculty in the BA program, before the School moves forward with an MA.

The School needs to focus on recruiting quality students (by being more selective and raising admission criteria) as opposed to seeking a large quantity of students.

Important

Assuming an academic path is chosen, the faculty of the School must increase research productivity, and the College should provide resources to do so. The School must identify relevant areas of academic focus and produce two to three peer-reviewed papers per year. Further, there needs to be support and reward for research and publications. This too was noted already in the past evaluation, and was not implemented.

Improve evaluation of teaching and research of academic core faculty, and clarify the evaluation process to the faculty. This is likely a function for The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning located in the Rector's Office.
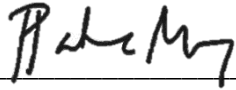
Desirable

Develop a strategy for promoting diversity of students and of faculty.

Further internationalize the curriculum through participation in international programs and also by connecting students with alumni who work in international settings. This would leverage the connections of the alumni to the experiences of the students in the classroom. The School should consider creating a staff position for outreach to alumni to manage this program.
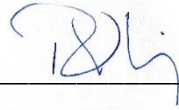
Signed by:
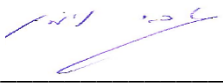
Prof. Patricia Moy

Committee Chair

_____

Prof. María Len-Ríos   Prof. Richard Ling

_____   _____

Prof. Gabriel Weimann

_____

November 2021

COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Prof. Patricia Moy
Department of Communication
University of Washington
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 **Communications** departments. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Mark Deuze, prof. Richard Ling, prof. Karen Ross, prof. Dhavan V. Shah, and prof. Gabriel Weimann.

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. Ido Perlman
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, Senior Advisor for Evaluation and Quality Enhancement, CHE