



# EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

**TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY**

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 [‘the evaluation committee’], under the auspices of the CHE’s Committee for the Evaluation of Communication in Israel<sup>1</sup>, 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The committee’s letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 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 Tel Aviv University was conducted on 05.04.2022);
- 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 this 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 Dan Department of Communication at Tel Aviv University. The institution was evaluated by Prof. Andrea Hickerson, Prof. Patricia Moy, and Prof. Karen Ross.

The EC would like to thank the management of the Dan Department of Communication 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.

## **Section 2: Executive Summary**

This assessment is based on a review of the self-evaluation report prepared by the Dan Department of Communication at Tel Aviv University, and the site visit conducted 5 April 2022 by the evaluation committee (Prof. Andrea Hickerson and Prof. Patricia Moy on site, and Prof. Karen Ross via Zoom). During that visit, the evaluation committee met with the University leadership, School leadership, senior academic faculty, adjunct faculty, BA, MA, and PhD students, as well as alumni. The on-site team members also were given a campus tour.

The Department punches above its weight in terms of research. Collaborative in nature, competitively funded, and published in the field's top journals, faculty research is high in both quantity and quality. The faculty engage in much public scholarship and carry a heavy advising load. Such competing time demands on research and teaching – particularly in light of the faculty's high research productivity – mean that the faculty are spread thin. It is imperative for the University to grow the tenure-stream ranks of the Department.

The Department offers programs across all academic levels – BA, MA, and PhD – and undergraduate enrollment has more than doubled in the past three years. The Department's focus on linking the communication field to jobs in the high-tech industry is attractive to students, especially to Arab students who favor majors with clear employment paths. Infrastructure, equipment, and resources appear sufficient to meet student and faculty needs, and to stay current with industry trends. Students expressed satisfaction with some aspects of their program but had suggestions for improvement, for example, in practical training. Graduate students and adjunct faculty contribute to the department's teaching mission, and the committee recommends supporting these two groups as well. In particular, the Department should provide opportunities for graduate students to be pedagogically stronger and for adjuncts to be more integrated into the unit.

## **Section 3: Observations**

### **3.1 The Institution**

Tel Aviv University was founded and started enrolling students in 1956, and was fully recognized by the Council for Higher Education in 1969. It is a comprehensive university comprising nine faculties and 31 schools, and in 2020, had over 29,000 students enrolled across its BA, MA, and PhD programs.

## 3.2 Internal Quality Assurance

Tel Aviv University assures the quality of its provision through the work of its Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC), which is chaired by the Vice Rector (with executive oversight from the Rector) and comprises senior faculty. The IQAC reviews all disciplinary programs on a five-year rolling basis, and specifies the criteria to be used in such reviews. It also is responsible for nominating experts to review the activity reports that are completed by those disciplines, as well as discussing their recommendations.

In relation to the current self-evaluation process, a special committee was established that included the Department chair, a faculty member, and an administrative secretary, together with a PhD student who was recruited to coordinate the report-writing. Committee members were tasked with drafting particular sections of the report; they met with individual faculty members and regularly with one another to review progress on the self-evaluation report. The draft report was available online to be read and commented upon by faculty members and the final approved report was sent to senior managers to be signed.

The weaknesses identified as part of the self-evaluation process included the small number of tenure-track faculty. Indeed, faculty size had been identified as a key issue in the previous evaluation report but has not grown since. However, other issues had been addressed, such as those related to rethinking the role of internships and workshops as well as increasing the unit's focus on new technologies.

More weaknesses raised in the current self-evaluation report were high teaching loads, no single major program and no international program, despite having gained permission to develop an international MA. The Department intends to pursue remedies to all these weaknesses through continued exhortations to Faculty of Social Sciences and university management.

## 3.3 Parent Unit

The Department of Communication's parent unit is the School of Social and Policy Studies, which falls under the Faculty of Social Sciences along with four other Schools: Psychology; Economics; Social Work; and Political Science, Government and International Affairs

## 3.4 Study program

The Dan Department of Communication teaches one double-major BA, one joint BA, one MA program, and a PhD program. In the double-major program, students choose one of two tracks for further study at the end of their first year, either Media Studies or the Networked Society. The former combines theoretical courses with applied workshops that form two specializations: one in journalism and the other in strategy

and public relations. The second track focuses on theoretical aspects of media and communication. The joint BA program is in collaboration with the Department of Sociology, called "Digital Society." This program focuses on the datafication of society, and offers theoretical courses and workshops related to social data, data analytics and basic programming. On the whole, the courses available to students reflect these different pathways and result in a very large set of offerings.

All programs and tracks offered by the Department are supervised by a curriculum committee that comprises three faculty members. Each study program (BA, MA, and PhD) is headed by a faculty member (an "adviser"). The two Media Studies specializations are led by two practitioners, one from journalism and one from marketing. The Networked Society track is led by a faculty member. Given the small size of the faculty, discussions regarding the programs/tracks occur in monthly departmental meetings or ad-hoc meetings or by email. Two administrative staff members are involved in the planning and day-to-day management of the programs/tracks, with ultimate responsibility residing with the Head of Department. All program changes require approval from the Faculty Curriculum Committee, which includes representatives from both the unit and other university authorities.

The Department's programs have evolved over time and reflect an implementation of recommendations made by the previous evaluation (for example, the integration of the Koteret Journalism School with the Department).

All Communication students take another major discipline in another department. The evaluation committee expresses deep concern over this required double major, as such an infrastructure could restrict the breadth and depth of students' learning experiences in relation to their future employability. Indeed, the Department is keen to develop a single-major BA degree in Communication, and according to students, there is a market for such a program.

Alongside the foundational content one could expect to see in communication theory and methods courses, the undergraduate curriculum engages with contemporary issues such as racism and sexism, and the internet generation. These courses are offered in addition to courses that focus on social media and the historicizing of new media technologies. Overall, the curriculum seems to balance theoretically oriented courses with practical ones, although some students noted some practice-based courses needed to devote more time to learning those skills and tools that would enable them to be credible in the job market. Making creative and scientific writing mandatory courses in the first year is good to see.

The Department is also extending the range of courses available in the MA program. This extension reflects changes in the industry along the same lines as those available in the BA digital society track. The Dean of School of Social and Policy Studies reported on plans to develop a suite of new MAs, including an international version of the

Communication MA. Once established as Hebrew-language programs, the University will be seeking approval for international versions of the new MAs.

The Department also runs an “excellence” program for high-achieving students, which provides a scholarship and enables them to enroll in the first year of the MA program as they are completing the final year of their BA program. Although students noted the rigor of this program, they extolled the benefits of being able to move straight into the thesis year of the MA program.

While the Department has a PhD program in place, it take on only a small number of students because of competing demands on faculty. The evaluation committee understands that there are resource (human and financial) implications for further developing the PhD program. However, the positive experience heard from one PhD student and from faculty suggests that there is a supportive environment in place and an appetite to develop it further.

The evaluation committee had a set of robust conversations with the students. Some students reported enrolling in the BA program based on how it was promoted, but were disappointed to find that the actual content did not match the description. They specifically mentioned the imbalance between theory and practice courses, that is, too skewed towards the former, and insufficient content focused on high-tech industries. The Department should ensure alignment of promotional materials and course content. Students also referred to misalignments between some course descriptions and the content actually delivered, particularly where workshops were concerned. It is important that the Department revise course descriptions to more accurately describe the content and ensure that faculty teaching those courses deliver the described content. Some students also talked about the duplication of course content across and between years, mostly in theory-based courses. While the committee acknowledges the importance of some foundational theories being taught in increasing depth from the first to the third year, the readings need to reflect different levels of depth and sophistication. Thus faculty teaching similar concepts should liaise with one another to ensure they are approaching concepts from multiple perspectives, and to the extent possible, using different texts.

Students also indicated they would like more opportunities for media production in their coursework. The evaluation committee visited a computer lab classroom with 32 seats, a very large class size for a hands-on course. Workshop assignments can be difficult and time-consuming to grade, so an instructor takes that into account when planning course assignments. The committee recommends imposing an enrollment cap in some hands-on workshops, so students can have more time to refine their media-production skills. Indeed, imposing such caps might result in the need to hire more adjuncts to teach additional sections.

The evaluation committee also learned of the large number of low-credit courses, which means that issues and concepts cannot be studied in any depth. Furthermore,

opportunities to develop skills and use tools for creating content on the practical courses are limited. The Department should consolidate some of the low-credit courses into high-credit courses. This would enhance and deepen learning and enable fewer but more sophisticated assignments to be completed.

The students who met with the evaluation committee had a number of suggestions relating to refreshing and revising the BA and MA curricula well as better orientation prior to commencing studies. While the committee cannot evaluate the merit of these suggestions, we strongly recommend that a formal mechanism be created by which students' ideas can be communicated to the Head of Department.

The course syllabi provided varied considerably in terms of content. Some provided a very short description and the timing of assignments, while others set out the week-by-week content, the learning outcomes, and recommended reading for the course and/or each week's topic. Some of the course outlines, where they included bibliographies, had quite a few dated references. Faculty should be required to review and refresh/update their essential and suggested readings, not least to take account of new research and practice. While there is a common template in use, there is variation in what content is included by course leaders and we recommend that all course outlines include the same basic information.

### 3.4.1 Training

Several internship options exist for students, depending on their chosen specialization track, all of which are offered as electives and all of which are credit-bearing. These options involve a wide range of organizations, many of which support social-justice initiatives such related to women, individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQ groups, among others. Group internships are also available at specific host organizations. Course leaders are responsible for matching students with internship hosts and for liaising with both students and hosts. It was good to note that for some courses, the host organization's assessment of student performance counts for 50% of the course grade. The self-evaluation report shows student placements and an encouraging array of job offers (pp. 44-45). The Department also takes part in the TAU Impact program (Mitchabrim+) which encourages social activism by BA students. In general, students spoke about the positive impact of these opportunities on skills development, workplace experience, and employability in the industry after graduation.

A number of BA and MA students are hired as teaching assistants. While students appreciated the opportunity to work in this capacity, some felt ill-prepared for the task, noting challenges such as managing the classroom and dealing with conflict and cultural sensitivity. The committee strongly recommends that these students are trained prior to starting their teaching, and mentored during their first semester.



### 3.4.2 Internationalization

Most of the “international” aspects of the Department’s activities focused on hosting non-Israeli scholars as guest lecturers. The evaluation committee recommends that the Department consider other efforts to internationalize, especially since most courses are taught in Hebrew and therefore limits which students are able to enroll in non-Hebrew-language courses. However, as noted above, the Department would like to develop an international MA program, and the committee understands that some courses are also taught in English. These observations speak to the need for the Department to develop a robust internationalization strategy that ties to both research and teaching.

## 3.5 Teaching and Learning outcomes

### 3.5.1 Teaching

As the self-evaluation report describes, the Dean of Innovative Teaching & Learning oversees teaching-quality activities. Efforts by the Dean and by the TAU Teaching Center are designed to promote students’ learning skills and faculty’s teaching quality (through teaching surveys and individual training and feedback), and to develop MOOCs (massive open online courses). In addition, the Teaching Center offers peer observations of faculty in the classroom (or online), and supports faculty as they are preparing their courses and writing their syllabi.

Teaching is evaluated when students complete a web-based survey at the end of each semester (under the supervision of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching). The Center sends the results to the unit heads along with a list of instructors with low evaluations. Unit heads use these data to assign instructors to courses, with the goal of having instructors with low scores improve their teaching. Instructors with high teaching evaluations are eligible for university-wide teaching awards.

In addition to these end-of-semester assessments, junior faculty are encouraged to use mid-semester surveys as a tool for formative evaluation.

### 3.5.2 Learning outcomes

The program-specific learning outcomes (LOs) for the BA, MA and PhD programs are all appropriate. For all programs, LOs are specified against four key aspects of teaching and learning: knowledge, analysis, critical thinking, and expertise. For those course outlines that included LOs (many did not), the LOs are appropriate given the course overview. However, we note that the syllabus template says that if there are no learning outcomes (LOs), then the LO section does not need to be completed. All courses must have a specific set of LOs, and assessments need to be identified to show that the LOs have (or have not) been met. (Note: When assessments were included in

the materials provided, they did not include a sufficient level of detail to allow the committee to determine whether learning outcomes were assessed appropriately.)

The evaluation committee heard of some useful and pedagogically sound practices related to revising assessment tasks due to COVID. These include creating project-based assignments that allow students to engage with and learn from one another during periods of isolation. The committee understands that such assignment forms have since become established in some courses. The Department should consider the useful lessons learned from COVID-based teaching and consider incorporating them into curriculum development.

## 3.6 Students

### 3.6.1 Admission and graduation

The admission process is clearly described, and around half the BA applicants are admitted. The number of applicants and thus registered students has been steadily rising. The number of PhD applicants is small but stable. The entering doctoral cohort is necessarily small as two of the faculty are junior lecturers and therefore not able to advise graduate students.

The self-evaluation report did not report a dropout rate, but rather a figure that included both the number of students who had dropped out and the number of students who did not graduate. The self-evaluation report explains this figure (roughly 30%) as stemming potentially from students being motivated to enroll in the professional BA track and learning that the practical courses in the first year were not what they had expected. The Department notes that dropouts occurred most in the first year, and when the unit learns of someone who wishes to withdraw from the program (particularly the MA), faculty meet with the students to understand their reasons and try to convince them to stay if it appears to be in the student's own interest to do so. The evaluation committee finds the overall dropout/non-graduation rate high, but commends the Department for making a concerted effort to increase transparency and clarity about BA expectations and to meet with MA students preemptively to reduce the dropout rate.

There has been a rise in student achievement over the past three years of data (2017-2019) across both BA programs.

### 3.6.2 Graduate students

In the MA program, students decide at the end of the first year whether or not to take the thesis track. Those who choose to do so are allowed to proceed based on teaching assessments, their thesis topic, and their letter of motivation.

During their first year, PhD students are assigned a supervisor and two other scholars who specialize in their research field. This committee follows the students' progress and evaluates their research proposal submitted at the end of the first year. Once the proposal has been approved, students work closely with their supervisors and submit annual progress reports that are reviewed by the full committee.

Due to a sizable donation, the Department has decided to allocate resources to supporting its doctoral students and their research. First, all doctoral students will receive a one-time scholarship after successfully defending their research proposal. Second, one doctoral student will receive a full scholarship. Finally, students may apply for funding to cover their research expenses.

### 3.6.3 Student support services

The Department appears to offer students a range of support services, from counseling to support those with special and additional needs, as well as financial support. All students have a designated academic advisor, which is good practice as it affords students the attention they might need. The Department is intending to organize an employment fair in the summer which sounds like a great initiative.

There is a clear feedback policy on courses: Students provide feedback via an online form at the end of each semester. For noncurricular issues, an informal mechanism is in place whereby student representatives can discuss concerns with the Head of Department. The Department should develop a formal structure for feedback, for example, a student-faculty liaison committee which handles both curricular and noncurricular issues that might arise.

### 3.6.4 Alumni

The Department does not have a formal structure for alumni relations. Alumni expressed that they would appreciate its development, especially as a way to connect with each other as well as keep connected to faculty. The evaluation committee strongly recommends establishing a formal structure by which alumni can engage with one another, the Department, and current students.

## 3.7 Human Resources

The Department has 8 tenure-track faculty, one professional-track faculty member, and 20 to 30 adjuncts. This translates to a faculty-to-student ratio of 1:47, the highest in the School. Workshops and seminars can have 30 students or more, and senior faculty teach 4 courses per semester on average. Also of note, the Department has 15 doctoral students and only 7 faculty members are qualified to supervise them. Despite this very heavy teaching and service load, about which faculty expressed concern, senior faculty maintain very impressive research output. Additionally, many engage in

public scholarship, such as writing government reports and writing for the popular press.

The evaluation committee is deeply concerned about the workload this puts on senior faculty. It is essential that the School provide the Department with the resources to hire more faculty, both tenure-track and, potentially, adjuncts. This issue was a key concern in the previous evaluation, but remains unaddressed. During the site visit, the Rector stated that programs receive resources, including new hires, based on their scientific excellence, budget stability, and student enrollment. Yet the data from the self-evaluation report indicate that the Department has easily met—indeed, surpassed—these thresholds.

The adjuncts with whom the evaluation committee met, all PhDs, said they would appreciate more opportunities to interact with full-time faculty. The committee recommends establishing a regular cycle of meetings, maybe once or twice a semester, for adjuncts to interact with each other and other faculty. Such meetings would promote collegiality and foster fruitful conversations about the relationship between theory and practice in their various courses. Because adjuncts lack general awareness of departmental policies and procedures, we also recommend developing a handbook for adjuncts that includes basic information on academic responsibilities and employment and promotion procedures.

### 3.8 Diversity

Tel Aviv University is committed to promoting diversity on campus. The self-evaluation report describes efforts designed to bolster equity on issues related to gender, ethnic and national minorities, and populations with difficulties or special needs. The self-evaluation report references a few initiatives, such as the Co-Impact Project on Minority Employment. Of note is a five-year plan to increase to 35% the number of women among senior faculty.

Ten percent of students in the TAU's Dan Department of Communication are Arab students. The Department believes it has succeeded in attracting Arab students because the Department capitalizes on the relationship between communication and high-tech jobs, and Arab students are drawn to fields with clear employment outcomes.

It should be noted that many diversity efforts are centered on students, and more effort should be put into faculty diversity, as well. It is appreciated that the Department's observation in its self-evaluation report that "creating a strong pool of diverse candidates is a long-term project that will require investment in excellent students and postdoctoral fellows from currently underrepresented groups." The Department should create a plan to diversify faculty. In the interim, it can bolster diversity by inviting diverse guest speakers to visit classes.

### 3.9 Research

The prolific faculty members at the Dan Department of Communication examine key questions in communication with implications for the most pressing issues of our times. Their rate of productivity aligns with the goals set out by the Faculty of the Social Sciences: two published articles a year, half of which should be published in the top quartile of journals ranked by Thompson Reuters' InCites ranking report (Q1 journals); and the securing of competitive grants. Indeed, faculty publications appear in flagship and other premier journals as well as reputable subfield journals and leading international academic publishing houses like Oxford University Press. With respect to grants, the faculty have secured in the past four years an impressive amount of nearly \$3 million USD; these funds come from competitive and prestigious funding agencies like the Israeli Science Foundation and the European Research Council.

Faculty research is conducted both solely and collaboratively, with students and colleagues at Tel Aviv University as well as abroad. Moreover, faculty scholarship reaches a broad and varied audience that range from the Israeli government to the media to public health officials. These public scholarship efforts are particularly impressive, not only because they address current issues (such as COVID-19) and bring academic and nonacademic audiences together, but also because they are transacted in Hebrew. This means that faculty are doing research in the traditional sense and publishing in English, all while working on Hebrew-language projects. Some faculty expressed concern that the university underestimated public-scholarship efforts in terms of time and credit. In a similar vein, during the site visit, faculty expressed concerns about how they feel obligated to publish Hebrew-language articles for their students, yet only English-language publications receive credit in annual assessments. Given how English is the lingua franca for the discipline, the Department should recognize Hebrew-language efforts as well as English-language ones.

The research record of the faculty reflects a unit that is punching above its weight. The faculty are productive despite a heavy teaching and advising load (not only in hours, but also faculty-to-student ratio). Two of the faculty are lecturers, and therefore unable to advise graduate students, which means that the advising load is distributed among fewer faculty. These figures also affect the number of doctoral students that can be admitted. Given its home at a university and the faculty's high productivity level, it is imperative that additional tenure-stream faculty be hired.

### 3.10 Infrastructure and Facilities

Department staff and students expressed satisfaction with access to appropriate labs, software and media equipment. The Department's Media-User-Interaction lab is a small but adequately equipped research lab with tools to track eye movements and facial expressions. Stakeholders did mention plans to expand into AR/VR research and teaching. This will require additional resources.

Tel Aviv University has several specialized libraries on campus. The committee toured the Library for Social Sciences, Management and Education, which includes communication resources and a reference librarian specializing in communication. The library is a lively space with private and group work spaces for students. The library is committed to making materials available to students online.

## **Section 4: Conclusions and Recommendations**

The evaluation committee finds much to commend about the Dan Department of Communication. Faculty produce rigorous scholarship that is published in the field's leading outlets; they actively secure grants; and they carry a heavy advising load. The undergraduate programs of study appear to train students well in meeting their post-baccalaureate goals, whether it is to enter the high-tech industry or enroll in a graduate program. With initiatives like the 3+1 program or the host of internship opportunities available to undergraduates, it is clear that students benefit from their time in the Department.

At the same time, the evaluation committee identified concerns related to human resources, infrastructure, teaching, and the overall program. The essential recommendations are more "big-picture" moves that, when implemented, will have positive trickle-down effects.

### **4.1 Recommendations**

#### **Essential**

First and foremost, the Department must hire more faculty, both tenure-track and, potentially, adjuncts.

To potentially reduce the dropout and non-graduation rates, the Department should ensure that promotional materials align with course content.

Similarly, course descriptions need to be revised so that they more accurately describe the content. The Department needs to ensure that faculty teaching those courses teach the content described.

Faculty should be required to review their essential and suggested readings and refresh/update them, not least to take into account the latest research and best practices.

Relatedly, all courses must articulate a specific set of learning outcomes, and include assessments that illustrate whether these outcomes have been achieved.

To improve students' learning experience and to better prepare TAs for their job, the Department needs to ensure that all students recruited to teach are trained and mentored pedagogically.

### **Important**

Vis-à-vis adjuncts, the Department should create for them a handbook that describes departmental processes, academic responsibilities, and employment procedures.

Also, the Department can initiate regular meetings (maybe once or twice a semester) for adjuncts to interact with each other and senior faculty.

Regarding course coordination, faculty teaching similar concepts should liaise with one other to ensure that they approach the concepts from multiple perspectives and avoid using the same texts across courses.

The Department should considering lowering the enrollment in some workshops so students can have more practice and better refine their media-production skills.

The Department should recognize faculty's Hebrew-language research efforts as well as English-language ones.

The Department should think about developing a broader internationalization strategy.

To ensure students' concerns and ideas about the program are heard, the Department should develop a formal structure for feedback. This can be in the form of a student-faculty liaison committee or regularly held meetings between students, faculty, and/or the Head of Department.

### **Desirable**

Finally, for matters related to teaching, the Department should ensure Related to teaching, the Department should ensure all course outlines include the same basic information.

As finding full-time and adjunct faculty is challenging, the Department can invite diverse guest speakers in classes as a small, short-term effort.

The Department also can reconsider the shape of the program and consolidate some low-credit courses into high-credit courses. Doing so would enhance and deepen learning and enable fewer but more sophisticated assignments to be completed.

Finally, the Department should continue to consider the useful pedagogical tools and lessons learned during COVID and incorporate them into curriculum development.

Signed by:

Prof. Patricia Moy  
*Committee Chair*

Patricia Moy

Prof. Andrea Hickerson

Andrea E Hickerson

Prof. Karen Ross

Karen Ross



## Appendix I: Letter of Appointment



November 2021

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ido Perlman'.

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