Response to Evaluation of the Communication Program at Sapir Academic College

Dear Prof. Moy, Prof. Hickerson and Prof. Ross,

We thank you for your thorough and detailed evaluation of the Communications Department at Sapir Academic College. We appreciate your warm words and overall positive report. As stated, we believe in providing high-quality education and training in communication for Israeli students. The recommendations provided by the committee will surely assist us in preserving and promoting our academic excellence.
Following are our replies to the issues raised in the report:

Essential issues for improvement:

Committee Recommendation	Steps toward implementation	timetable
1. Acceptance of more than 10% incoming students on probation	We reviewed the acceptance rates of students on probation as well as the admissions process. We observed that some candidates admitted on probation should have been accepted on regular terms and that probation was erroneously used as a tool for cautioning students as to their "borderline" success in the personal interview. To correct this the decision-making process of acceptance was revised, effective immediately, so that: a) interviewees who meet the required grades can be either accepted or rejected following their interview. b) only interviewees that do not meet the required grades can be accepted on probation following their interview. We will continue to monitor the rate of acceptance on probation.	2022-2023
2. Departmental mechanisms to inform students and involve them	The department is reinstating the student-faculty liaison committee, headed by Dr. Hagar Lahav. The committee will include two elected student representatives from each academic year, a teaching assistant, and the administrative student coordinator. The committee will meet four times a year and its minutes will be published to all students and faculty. This will improve students' knowledge of how their feedback is addressed and implemented whenever necessary.	2022-2023
3. Redefining program learning outcomes (LOs)	1) Sapir Academic College has initiated a college-wide adaptation of "Bologna Syllabi", which requires a clear definition of learning	2022-2024

	outcomes in all course syllabi. So, this will be implemented in the Communications Department. 2) The information provided to candidates and students on the departmental website will be revised to include LOs.	

Important issues for improvement:

Committee Recommendation	Steps toward implementation	timetable
4. Bibliographic sources in diverse languages	The field of communication studies is intensively covered by the titles and databases at the college's Nazarian Academic Library. These are mainly in English and Hebrew, the latter being the official study language. We agree that more holdings in Arabic could be useful. The department has a library referent – Prof. Einat Lachover, and under her guidance all lecturers routinely enrich the library's multi-lingual holdings.	Routine enlargement of library holdings (within budget limitations).
5. Adding and enhancing new media courses	As of 2021-2022, the introductory (mandatory) courses for journalism and marketing communications have been revised to include significantly more digital content and skills. New courses focusing on digital content, technology, and research were added for the present academic year (2022-23). These include *Introduction to Social Metaverse Activities, Digital Methodologies, The Innovation Lab: Digital Communities and the Third Sector.* Additional courses will be considered for the coming years.	2021-2024
6. Providing remote access to key software programs	The students mainly use Adobe software. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, remote access was provided by Adobe's generous academic open access. We agree with the recommendation for supplying remote access to key software programs routinely and will request a budget for this.	Depending on College budgets
7. Recognizing Hebrew-language publications of the faculty	Sapir College recognizes Hebrew-language publications of its entire faculty yet considers these as having lesser value than English-language ones. We are in complete agreement with the committee's recommendation, especially in the field of Israeli communication. As of September 2022, Sapir College has set up a research authority,	2022 onward

Committee Recommendation	Steps toward implementation	timetable
	and among its goals is the reassessment of the faculty's Hebrew language publications. The department will address this issue vis-à-vis the Research Authority.	

Desirable issues for improvement:

Committee Recommendation	Steps toward implementation	timetable
8. Academic Advising	The student-faculty liaison committee will give additional support for students and enhance information flow vis-à-vis students. Furthermore, the teaching committee will consider building a more team approach.	2022-2023
9. Student-alumni connections	On June 7, 2023, the department will hold an alumni reunion celebrating its 25th anniversary. Dr. Rivka Neriya-Ben Shahar heads the reunion's organizing committee, which comprises alumni from various years. Towards this event we will approach all 3800 of our graduates and renew our connection with them. Following the reunion, we will create a newsletter to improve our routine alumni networking.	2022-2023
10. Developing a course on data and/or multimedia journalism	As of 2022, the introductory course on journalism has increased its emphasis on multimedia journalism. We will consider further developing of teaching these subjects with the Journalism Track's faculty.	2022-2023
11. Standardizing the course information students receive	As of 2022, Sapir College has established a central teaching committee which oversees this process in the framework of the move to "Bologna Syllabi". The department will operate according to the college's instructions.	2022-2024

Once again, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the committee's thorough review and its valuable recommendations.

Sincerely,
Dr. Yuval Gozansky
Chair of the Communications Department

Dr. Inbal Ben-Asher Gitler
Chair of the Departmental Teaching Committee