



כ"ה בתשרי תשפ"ג
20 באוקטובר 2022

לכבוד
ד"ר ורדה בן-שאול, סמנכ"ל
האגף להערכת איכות והבטחתה
המועצה להשכלה גבוהה

שלום רב,

מצ"ב תגובת המחלקה לתקשורת לדו"ח הוועדה להערכת איכות בתחום התקשורת.

בברכה,

אבי-חי חובב

העתק:

ד"ר לירן גורדון, ממונה הערכת איכות והבטחתה
גב' ענת חיינה, האגף להערכת איכות והבטחתה



Response of the Department of Communication and Journalism to the Recommendations of the Committee for the Evaluation of Communication Programs in Israel

* These responses follow a discussion of the report and its recommendations – along with the department's vision and future strategic plans - at a special two-day retreat held in September 2022.

Committee Recommendation	Steps toward implementation (including time table)
1. There is a rather high dropout rate for the undergraduate students. The Department needs to monitor these numbers and take steps to ensure that students have the resources that they need in order to succeed.	<p>The rate of Communication students dropping out of the university has declined since 2016 (the last data point given in the report), with an average rate of 3.27% for 2016-22, which is below the combined rate of 3.64% for all Social Sciences departments for the same period. Transfer of students to other departments within the university is 5.02% for this period, compared to 7.32% for the entire Social Sciences Faculty.</p> <p><u>Nevertheless</u>, we have instituted a new monitoring procedure, operated by the BA Advisors along with the Department Administrators, to identify and counsel all students failing or having serious difficulties with their courses from the first year onwards. This is in addition to our ongoing support and mentoring schemes.</p>
2. The language courses and mentoring for Arabic students should continue and be expanded.	<p>The current courses are continuing and will be expanded in accordance with the number of Arabic speaking undergraduate students. We have also added two new elective courses (one BA and one MA), taught in Hebrew but with an Arabic-speaking teacher who will be able to advise students and also accept assignments in Arabic. Finally, we are continuing our mentoring of Arabic speaking graduate students and our</p>



	active policy of encouraging them to work as teaching and research assistants.
3. The digital infrastructure of the university needs to be reviewed in the wake of the recent application of online teaching, hybrid teaching, new modes of interaction, etc. The Department should collaborate with the University in developing a strategy to build the unit's digital infrastructure.	We continue our active collaboration with the Social Science Faculty in promoting online teaching in specific courses, and several department members have successfully developed and implemented new online and hybrid courses as part of the Faculty's digital program. We have also urged the Social Science Faculty to implement further improvements in the WIFI infrastructure.
4. Support needs to be provided for graduate school and students, particularly incoming MA students from different universities to help transition them to becoming doctoral students.	We have just established a new Smart Scholarship Program for Advanced Studies in Communications, and recruited an initial cohort of 6 students who will be fully funded (with a monthly stipend) through the MA and given intensive mentoring and support with a view to pursuing doctoral research. The program uses the limited funds currently available to the department and is also financed by department members' external research grants. Our strategic plans include raising additional support, with the university's help, to broaden this program to include fully-funded doctoral students.
5. There has been a move to engage the top honors students as teaching assistants in some courses. Some students said the quality of the TA grading and pedagogy can be somewhat uneven, which suggests a need for training and increased communication between instructors and TAs.	The engagement of top honors 3 rd year undergraduates was a temporary measure designed to meet a sudden shortage of suitable MA and PhD students. Thanks to our successful recruitment of new MA students, among them last year's honors students who have continued to the MA program, we currently have only a few 3 rd year teaching assistants (the rest are graduate students). We have also instituted regular feedback meetings with representatives of the teaching assistants, and have produced a guide for new TAs.



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6. To help the unit rebound from faculty attrition, as noted in the self-evaluation report, the Department should pursue the hiring of a journalism position.	The department intends to recruit a suitable journalism scholar in the next few years.
7. The Department should seek to increase compensation for faculty with administrative loads.	The department has approached the Social Sciences Faculty on this issue.