



# EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT ARIEL UNIVERSITY

COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY  
DEPARTMENTS IN ISRAEL

## Section 1: Background and Procedures

- 1.1 In the academic year 2019-20 the Council for Higher Education [CHE] put in place arrangements for the evaluation of study programs in the field of Physical therapy sciences in Israel.
- 1.2 The Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] participating in the evaluation process were:
  - Ariel University
  - Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
  - Tel Aviv University
  - Zefat Academic College
  - University of Haifa
- 1.3 To undertake the evaluation, the Vice Chair of the CHE appointed a Committee consisting of<sup>1</sup>:
  - 1.3.1 **Prof. Stuart Binder-Macleod**- Edward L. Ratledge Professor Emeritus, Department of Physical Therapy University of Delaware, USA-Committee Chair
  - 1.3.2 **Prof. Lori Michener**-Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy University of Southern California, USA
  - 1.3.3 **Prof. Yocheved (Yochy) Laufer**- (EMERITUS), Department of Physical therapy, University of Haifa, Israel.
  - 1.3.4 **Prof. Chad E. Cook**- Division of Physical Therapy, Department of Orthopedics, Duke University, USA
- Ms. Alex Buslovich Bilik and Mr. Yarden Biyalistok Cohen served as the Coordinators of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.
- 1.4 The evaluation process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (February 2019). Within this framework the evaluation committee was required to:
  - examine the self-evaluation reports submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Physical Therapy
  - Conduct virtual site visits at 5 institutions participating in the evaluation process.
  - 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

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<sup>1</sup> The committee's letter of appointment is attached as **Appendix 1**.

- submit to the CHE a general report regarding the evaluated field of study within the Israeli system of higher education

**1.5** The evaluation committee examined only the evidence provided by each participating institution — considering 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 visit to each of the institutions.

**1.6** This report deals with the **Physical therapy department** in the **Adelson School of Medicine** at **Ariel University**. The Committee's visit to **Ariel university (via Zoom)** took place on **14-15/2/2021**. The schedule of the visit is attached as **Appendix 2**.

## **Section 2: Executive Summary**

As external committee members, we take our roles and responsibilities seriously. Within this document, we make a number of suggestions that are designed to improve the faculty and student experience during the educational process. Consequently, all suggestions are made in good faith and are endorsed by the committee as a whole. We truly appreciate the opportunity to provide this feedback and consider it an honor.

Overall, the committee believes that the Department of Physical Therapy at Ariel University is doing an outstanding job of meeting its mission of educating physical therapy students at the baccalaureate and master's degree levels. We were most impressed with the commitment made by the University and the progress made by the Department in the development of a productive research program. We also appreciate the effort made in providing a comprehensive and well-written report. The Department is fortunate to have a hard-working faculty that is committed to training outstanding physical therapist clinicians and researchers. The major recommendations outlined in our report note the need to hire additional administrative staff to support the unit and the need to develop a formal process for the regular review of the curriculum. Also, the committee recommends several specific changes to the curriculum, including reducing the number of credits required for the BPT degree, consolidating several small (0.5 to 1.0 credits) classes, and providing hands on experience for the BPT students prior to their fourth year of training. The need to reduce the number of credits and the consolidation of small classes is a common characteristic of all the current BPT programs in Israel. Also, common to all Israeli programs, the committee recommends developing and implementing the yearly assessment of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service. Finally, the committee supports the identified need to hire additional research faculty members, hiring a technician / engineer to support and maintain the laboratory equipment within the Department, assigning contiguous spaces in one or

two nearby buildings for teaching and research, and provide shared office space for the clinical faculty members who teach part time in the Department.

## **Section 3: Observations**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The mission of Ariel University is to develop an institution of higher education dedicated to academic excellence, and to create opportunities for academic education for underprivileged communities within the Israeli population. The mission of the undergraduate BPT program is to prepare students to become PT's who embrace evidence-based practice, meet the multifaceted health needs of patients and society, participate in professional and community service, while promoting academic excellence, ethics, and social responsibility. The mission of the graduate program is to provide in-depth theoretical knowledge appropriate for the PT MSc degree and to advance research skills. The self-study document carefully detailed the efforts to engage students and faculty synergistically to build a PT program that reflected the University's focus.

We feel it is evident that teaching excellence is a significant component of Ariel University's mission. The university's commitment to excellence in teaching is reinforced by the establishment and ongoing activities of the Academic Assessment and Development Unit. Conversations with faculty, leadership and students all reinforced teaching as a strength within the program. Social responsibility and a sense of "family" were common themes offered by all students (BPT, masters, and PhD students) during discussions. A passionate focus on evidence-based medicine was embedded throughout the BPT and master's curricula; a focus that was echoed by senior leadership. For example, Dean Ruth Birk stated "the Vision of the Health Science Program is to inspire to develop hands-on teaching, interdisciplinary research, innovation, digital learning, alternative education, and the promotion of international collaboration."

### **3.2 Management and Administration**

The organizational structure is clearly described in the self-evaluation report. The Physiotherapy Department is housed in the School of Health Sciences. The head of the Department reports to the Dean of the School of Health Sciences. The head of the Department is elected by the faculty (senior lecturer or higher rank) for a 3-year term, and can be re-elected for a 2nd 3-year term. There is close communication between the senior leadership, head of the school, and head of the Department. There was a strong sense of support for the head of Physiotherapy Department by the higher administration and from the faculty.

The Physiotherapy Department has 2 programs; the Bachelors in Physiotherapy (BPT) program and the Master's of Science (MScPT) program. The self-study was performed for the BPT and MScPT program. The Physiotherapy Department also sponsors students in the PhD program, which is under the direct supervision of the School of Graduate Studies. The development of a PhD program within the

Physiotherapy Department is under development and currently at the university level for decision-making.

The Physiotherapy Department has a large body of students across 2 programs, and in the participation in the PhD program. In the 2018/2019 years, there are 186 and for the MScPT there are 20 students. The Department faculty currently sponsors 11 PhD students. The Physiotherapy Department has 15 full-time academic faculty. There are plans to recruit and hire 3-4 more faculty to advance the research and teaching objectives of the Department. The Physiotherapy Department has autonomy for all hiring decisions. Though there are institutional and departmental policies and goals related to student and faculty diversity, no specific data were provided regarding the success of the current efforts.

One area of concern noted by the review committee was the lack of adequate administrative support. There are currently 1.6 individuals for this large department, which is inadequate and places an unnecessary burden on the faculty to carry out the many administrative tasks required to deliver two PT programs.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Provide more administrative assistance by hiring an additional individual, bringing up the total to 2.6 individuals within 1 year.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.3 QA & Self-Evaluation Process**

Overall the review committee found the self-evaluation report to be clear, concise and generally easy to follow. The Department Head clearly engaged appropriate stakeholders in the writing of the report. The document clearly shows that the department is most proud of the substantial improvements that they have made since the last CHE review. The current review committee concurs. The Department faculty are firmly committed to quality improvement within both current academic programs. The curriculum appears to be very dynamic and attempts to continuously reflect contemporary clinical practice.

The University's Quality Assessment and Academic Instruction Unit administers end-of-semester course and faculty evaluation surveys, the results of which are distributed to the faculty member and Department head. The student evaluations are used to identify both problems with teaching performance, as noted by the students, and to recognize and reward outstanding teachers. However, there does not appear to be a system of peer-evaluation in place. This results in an overreliance of the evaluation of teaching performance on student feedback for determining teacher performance.

**Recommendation (Desirable):** Implement a formal system of peer evaluation that evaluates the teaching effectiveness, rigor, and appropriateness of course content.

The program has not incorporated a culture of formal student outcomes and assessment. This includes student learning outcomes, which are the benchmarks of student performance. By definition, student learning outcomes are the

comprehensive performance metrics of students (e.g., licensure pass rates, test scores, progress within the program, student experience, OSCE scores, and other markers of 'learning' within the program). This lack of a culture of assessment can lead to a decreased ability of the program to oversee the formal and informal aspects of learning *within* the program. Whereas student licensure is one method of measuring the programs "outcomes", the results are heavily skewed toward each student passing, are likely reflective of minimal performance and do not distinguish the quality of the educational experience.

**Recommendations (Essential):** Create and measure yearly formal student learning outcomes to determine program performance.

A formal Internal curriculum review is lacking and is likely reflective of the lack of a formal programmatic assessment. Although it was well described that faculty meet and discuss curriculum needs, there is no formal review process, no definitive timeframes for a regular assessment of the curriculum, and no tangible way of refining educational needs. A formal structure is needed to assure that educational needs are met and that the curriculum remains comprehensive and modern.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Develop and implement a formal curriculum assessment process (timing and structure) that is designed to evaluate the curriculum on a regular basis. Include stakeholders such as clinical instructors, faculty, and students. On a less frequent basis, an extensive review should take place that involves external reviewers and alumni to provide objective assessment of the curriculum.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University meets the acceptable threshold level of performance.***

### **3.4 Study program**

#### BPT Study program

Overall, the department should be praised for a comprehensive program which provides an excellent well-rounded academic education of entry level physical therapy practitioners. The self-evaluation report and discussions with the faculty, students, alumni, and clinical instructors indicate that the program leads to well-prepared professionals with the scientific background and clinical skills necessary for becoming competent PTs who are committed to incorporating best available scientific evidence into their clinical decision-making process. Alumni noted they all felt very well prepared to work in a variety of clinical settings. They believe that all of the faculty were up to date regarding evolving clinical practice and that what they were being taught was heavily "based on research". The program should be commended for stressing in addition to the acquisition of knowledge and clinical treatment skills, the development of their graduates' interpersonal communication skills, commitment to ethical behavior, and to becoming lifelong learners. Students as well as alumni are proud of the education and training they received at Ariel and in their chosen profession.

Overall, the program contains too many credits and during the first 3 years the students are in class 35 to 40 hours a week. Both faculty and students feel the burden is high and the students' focus is on "surviving" rather than on thriving. While the self-evaluation report indicates that the program is continuously updated, the updating process is not clear and does not seem structured. Although described as "zero-sum" in its burden over time (i.e., no additional credits or contact hours), this requirement is not formally prescribed. Most of the changes reported involved adding courses rather than reducing their number or consolidating small courses.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Reduce the number of credits required for completion of the bachelor program. Consolidate courses into larger themes (e.g., health promotion, professional practice, etc). This may help reduce the number of credits, improve integration of overall content, and reduce student and programmatic burden by reducing the number of syllabi, redundancy, and assessments. An external consultant (non-affiliated academician) may assist in this process to reduce the load and burden on the students without compromising the quality of the program.

All the clinical affiliations are pushed to the fourth and final year of study. While this makes scheduling the courses during the preceding years much simpler, it has several drawbacks: a. Students may find late in the program that interacting with patients is very different from theoretical studies or practicing on peers, and may find themselves late in the game disappointed with their choice of a profession; b. Students may fail the clinical studies in spite of doing well in the first 3 years of study which may leave them empty handed after 3 years of intensive study. In addition, being so advanced in the program may also make it much harder for an instructor to decide to fail a student in an affiliation; c. Following a clinical affiliation students are better able to understand and integrate the various theoretical components of the program. Current students (from all years) and faculty recommended the incorporation of clinical exposure, service opportunities, and engagement with more patients during the first three didactic training years to provide context. We feel this reflects professional service needs in the mission and is a major deficiency in this category.

**Recommendation (Essential):** The program must provide hands on experience for the BPT students prior to their fourth year of training. These experiences can include opportunities for integrated clinical experiences within external clinical healthcare systems and providers. Expanding the physiotherapy clinic on campus to include adult patients with musculoskeletal and neurological conditions may offer an opportunity to engage in clinical practice in the earlier years.

### M.Sc Program

The M.Sc program includes a relatively small number of students (in 2018/19 there were 10 in the thesis track and 1 in the non-thesis track). The master's students interviewed praised Areil's reputation as a university that was student centered and created a holistic, well rounded clinician. The master program is geared primarily for the students in the thesis (research) track. The research courses provided, the research supervision by the faculty members, the statistical support, and availability of labs and clinical sites necessary for conducting research at the master level are

more than adequate. The majority of the students complete their thesis within 3 years of study, which is commendable especially during the trying times of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the variety of courses for students who prefer to expand their knowledge at the master level and do not wish to embark on research (non-thesis track) is low.

**Recommendation (Important):** Re-evaluate the goals of the master program, specifically the non-thesis track, and provide a decision in 3 years whether to continue with a non-thesis track. If the decision is to continue, more elective courses must be made available to the students.

### PhD Program

Though the Department does not currently run the PhD program, the PhD students with whom we met were very complimentary of their advisors and the program. Support staff were very helpful. They all felt that the program was preparing them very well for a faculty position or job in industry. The current students noted that all of the resources that they needed to be successful were already available. They felt as though the University was very supportive of them and their studies.

**Recommendation (Important):** The review committee supports the desire of the Department to establish its own PhD program.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.5 Teaching and Learning**

Much emphasis is put into ensuring a positive and effective learning experience in both the BSc and M.Sc programs. Faculty are offered multiple opportunities to develop their teaching skills via courses, seminars and individual assistance in handling teaching technology. The faculty seems to appreciate and utilize these opportunities. The department supports faculty initiatives in developing their effectiveness as teachers (e.g. the utilization of the University's simulation center to teach professional ethics and interpersonal communication skills). The interviewed students and alumni provided consistent praise regarding the commitment of the faculty to providing a supportive learning environment. Teaching and student evaluations include a variety of tools such as tests, class presentations, written assignments, which are conducive to developing communication skills and independent learning abilities.

**Recommendation: None**

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.6 Faculty**



Ariel University is the youngest university in Israel. The self-study report indicates 15 academic faculty members. The majority of academic faculty are physiotherapists and demonstrate a culture of collegiality and collaboration in teaching, research, and mentoring. The clinical faculty, defined as those who work in area clinics and teach part-time in the program, expressed a strong commitment to the program's growth and their development as clinical and classroom educators. The clinical faculty described a strong working relationship with the academic faculty. All the faculty are passionate about the program, and very proud of their programs. There is strong engagement between the faculty and students. Over and over again the word 'family' was used to describe the relationship among and between academic faculty, clinical faculty, and students. The second word commonly used was 'proud'; the faculty and students are extremely proud to stay they work/attend Ariel University.

All faculty participate in some level of teaching. Teaching excellence is a significant component of Ariel University's mission (p. 11 self-study). Administration, faculty, and students reiterated an emphasis on the value of teaching excellence across the review team's meetings. The teaching committees and Department Chair provide monitoring and feedback to continually develop and improve teaching effectiveness.

The Department has a high percentage of faculty with active research agendas (10 of 15 faculty). The Rector, Dean, Head of School and Chair of the Department all indicated faculty recruitment is a priority. For research specifically, they indicated the need for continued appropriate start-up funds to facilitate the initiation of research infrastructure and for graduate student support. Future goals of the Department for growth in the next 5 years are to recruit 3-4 more faculty in areas that are not well covered in research and teaching.

**Recommendation (Important):** Maintain the goal to recruit 3-4 more faculty. However, rather than hiring additional faculty that cover a wide range of clinical and research areas (as is currently planned), consider either building on current strengths or pursue a cluster hire in a particular area of high potential impact. Also consider hiring underrepresented minorities to improve diversity in the faculty.

Mentoring is a key part of the success at Ariel University. Faculty are assigned a general mentor in the Department when first hired and are encouraged to seek additional specific mentorship as needed within the Department and across the University. Collaboration is encouraged, but may be difficult with the teaching loads and research space restrictions. The move to the new building in March 2021 will facilitate contiguous space and improve the ability for collaboration. With the addition of the medical school, this should bring more and varied researchers for collaborative opportunities.

There is a Head of Quality Assessment and Academic Instruction. Faculty are assessed on their teaching effectiveness primarily with student assessments. The student completion rate of course evaluations was informally reported at 50 - 70% for most courses. The faculty report this rate is higher than expected because the students are rewarded for assessment completion with the ability to register early for elective courses (16 credits of electives are required). Faculty whose student assessments are below 3.5 (0-5; 5=highest) are triggered for training with teaching, and a meeting with the Dean and Department Head. A parallel process occurs; assessment of teaching effectiveness by the teaching committee. Student course assessments are

also used to recognize outstanding teachers and for faculty retention and promotion decisions. The department may consider peer evaluations, especially in those cases where student assessments are below 3.5. This process is well-described for those faculty who do not meet the threshold for effective teaching. All faculty may benefit from standard yearly evaluations. Promotion decisions are based on teaching assessments as described above, scholarship (publications and grants) and service. There are also specified years required between promotion levels (~5 years), with a mid-term assessment at 3 years to determine progress in development to reach the next promotion. This process is well described for promotion and tenure.

**Recommendation (Important):** Develop and implement yearly assessments of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service. This currently occurs on an informal basis. A scheduled yearly assessment, and review by the Head of the Department would provide faculty with regular evaluation and feedback on performance to enable growth and development. This yearly evaluation would also measure whether the faculty are aligned with programmatic mission and goals, and whether they are on track for promotion and tenure within the college.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.7 Research**

The committee notes substantial progress in the research productivity of the faculty over the past 10 years. This is due in large to the support the University has provided to the Department. The Department has recently attracted outstanding new research oriented and capable faculty. The start-up packages being offered are very competitive and have helped to launch the research careers of these new faculty members. Also, it was noted during our visit there is very good University support for the PhD students. All full-time PhD students are supported by the University. This has also strengthened the research program within the Department. The University has available statistical consultation for a fee. The University provides a 50% cost share for these services. The University also provides free copy-editing services for the faculty.

Currently there are five dedicated PT faculty member research laboratories and a sixth is under construction. Ten faculty members currently share the five laboratories. The major complaint regarding research facilities is that the laboratories are spread around the campus.

**Recommendation (Important):** See space recommendation identified in the Infrastructure section.

The only other concern voiced by the faculty regarding research support was the lack of a support person for operation and maintenance of laboratory equipment.

**Recommendation (Important):** The University should consider hiring a technician / engineer to support and maintain the laboratory equipment within the Department.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.8 Students**

Both faculty and clinical instructors spoke glowingly about the Ariel students. During admissions, students are selected and prioritized in two ways. The system encourages an early admissions approach in which early applicants are given priority status for admissions (“first come, first serve”). There does not appear to be a rank order with the exception of minority students who meet the psychometric requirements for program entry, who are prioritized at the initial admissions phase. Dropout rates are approximately 5% overall. The students score high on the standard psychometric test measures and the scores of students are increasingly higher the last three years.

Clinical instructors felt that the Ariel students were as good as or better than comparable institutions. They reported that the students functioned at a “high level” and that the way they engaged patients was reflective of their training and a holistic focus on the patient. The CI’s felt that the standardized method in which students are evaluated provided critical evidence of a student’s progress. The only recommendations of the CI’s were earlier opportunities for students to receive live patient exposure.

It was very evident that the BPT and Masters’ students appreciated the faculty’s commitment to the program and that there was a high level of praise for the faculty. Student’s described the learning environment as “family-like”. They appreciated the class size and felt it was large enough for diversity in opinion, but small enough to engage the faculty when they felt they needed additional interactions. They were proud of their faculty’s efforts in research and felt it improved the learning experiences (both in content and passionate delivery). The students reported instances in which the faculty supported their needs and functioned as mentors and collaborators, as well as teachers. They reported that they did fill out feedback forms and that these were used to make changes. They also reported that the current student liaison system functions well and they praised both the student advocacy aspect as well as the faculty receptiveness. They wholeheartedly said they would select Ariel again as their first choice of PT schools in Israel. PhD students felt very supported within the program. They felt that their advisors were available to meet, and helped develop their goals for graduation. They were pleased with the level of resources for PhD students.

The students did not feel there were diversity issues at the BPT program. They reported a diverse population of Israeli students, reflecting a wide breadth of backgrounds and experiences. This suggests that the university’s focus on diversity is mostly met; with minor limitations within the BPT program.

**Recommendation (Desirable):** Explore pipeline programs to increase interests in the BPT program for high school Arab students who could meet the initial criteria for program entry.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University exceeds the expected threshold level of performance.***

### **3.9 Infrastructure**

The University administration and Department faculty noted that, in general, the infrastructure currently in place is adequate to support both the research and educational programs within the Department. There are currently five dedicated PT research laboratories and one additional laboratory is under construction. There is also dedicated teaching space on campus to accommodate the unique teaching needs of the PT program. The major concern identified by the faculty was the disbursement of current research laboratories across the campus. This situation should be improved with the opening of the new Health Sciences and Medicine building, scheduled to occur in March or April of 2021. However, it is not clear if adequate space will be available in the new building to accommodate all of the research laboratory needs of the Department.

**Recommendation (Important):** Continue to prioritize contiguous spaces in one or two nearby buildings for teaching and research.

During the meeting with the clinical instructor it was noted that there are a large number of faculty members who teach part-time in the program. They are critical teachers in the program. In the Physiotherapy Department they do not have a place to meet, collaborate, store their belongings, and work. Shared office space is needed.

**Recommendation (Important):** The Department needs to provide shared office space for clinical faculty who teach part time in the Department.

***In this area of evaluation, the Committee determined that Ariel University clearly meets the expected threshold level of performance.***

## **Section 4: Recommendations**

### **Essential**

1. Provide more administrative assistance by hiring an additional individual, bringing up the total to 2.6 individuals within 1 year.
2. Create and measure yearly formal student learning outcomes to determine program performance.
3. Develop and implement a formal curriculum assessment process (timing and structure) that is designed to evaluate the curriculum on a regular basis. Include stakeholders such as clinical instructors, faculty, and students. On a less frequent basis, an extensive review should take place that involves external reviewers and alumni to provide objective assessment of the curriculum.
4. Reduce the number of credits required for completion of the bachelor program. Consolidate courses into larger themes (e.g., health promotion,

professional practice, etc). This may help reduce the number of credits, improve integration of overall content, and reduce student and programmatic burden by reducing the number of syllabi, redundancy, and assessments. An external consultant (non-affiliated academician) may assist in this process to reduce the load and burden on the students without compromising the quality of the program.

5. The program must provide hands on experience for the BPT students prior to their fourth year of training. These experiences can include opportunities for integrated clinical experiences within external clinical healthcare systems and providers. Expanding the physiotherapy clinic on campus to include adult patients with musculoskeletal and neurological conditions may offer an opportunity to engage in clinical practice in the earlier years.

### **Important**

1. Re-evaluate the goals of the master program, specifically the non-thesis track, and provide a decision in 3 years whether to continue with a non-thesis track. If the decision is to continue, more elective courses must be made available to the students.
2. The review committee supports the desire of the Department to establish its own PhD program.
3. Maintain the goal to recruit 3-4 more faculty. However, rather than hiring additional faculty that cover a wide range of clinical and research areas (as is currently planned), consider either building on current strengths or pursue a cluster hire in a particular area of high potential impact. Also consider hiring underrepresented minorities to improve diversity in the faculty.
4. Develop and implement yearly assessments of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service. This currently occurs on an informal basis. A scheduled yearly assessment, and review by the Head of the Department would provide faculty with regular evaluation and feedback on performance to enable growth and development. This yearly evaluation would also measure whether the faculty are aligned with programmatic mission and goals, and whether they are on track for promotion and tenure within the college.
5. The University should consider hiring a technician / engineer to support and maintain the laboratory equipment within the Department.
6. Continue to prioritize contiguous spaces in one or two nearby buildings for teaching and research.
7. The Department needs to provide shared office space for clinical faculty who teach part time in the Department

### **Desirable**

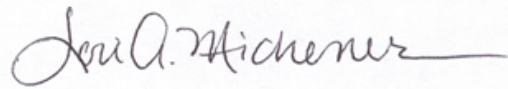
1. Implement a formal system of peer evaluation that evaluates the teaching effectiveness, rigor, and appropriateness of course content.
2. Explore pipeline programs to increase interests in the BPT program for high school Arab students who could meet the initial criteria for program entry.

**Signed by:**



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Prof., Stuart Binder-MacLeod  
Chair



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Prof. Lori A. Michener



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Prof. Chad Cook



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Prof. Yocheved Laufer

## Appendix 1 – Letter of appointment



January 2020

Prof. Emeritus Stuart Binder Macleod  
Department of physical therapy  
University of Delaware  
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 a member of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of **Physical Therapy** departments. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Lori Michener, prof. Chad Cook, and prof. ~~Yocheved~~ Laufer.

Ms. Alex ~~Buslovich Bilik~~ will be the coordinator of the Committee.

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. Alex ~~Buslovich Bilik~~, Committee Coordinator

## Appendix 2 – Visit schedule



<b>Physical Therapy Evaluation Committee - Schedule of online visit</b> <b>Ariel University</b> <b>Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b> <b>*The visit will be divided into 2 half days, starting at 17:00 (Israel time)</b> <b>*Meetings are conducted in a Q&amp;A format</b>		
Time	Subject	Participants
17:00-17:30	Opening session with the heads of the institution	Prof. Yehuda Danon - President Prof. Albert Pinhasov - Rector Prof. Idit Sohlberg - Vice rector Prof. Ruth Birk - Dean Prof. Ofira Einstein - Head of the department Prof. Nitza Davidovitch - Head of quality assessment and academic instruction
17:30-18:00	Meeting with the Dean of School of Health Sciences	Prof. Ruth Birk
<b>18:00-18:15</b>	<b>Break</b>	
18:15-18:45	Presentation by the Head of the Department of physical therapy *	Prof. Ofira Einstein – Head of the department Prof. Shmuel Springer – Head of the Mater's program, former head of the department
18:45-19:15	Meeting with the Head of the Department of physical therapy (Q&A)*	
19:15-19:30	Virtual tour*** of facilities and infrastructure followed by a short Q&A*	<b>Senior academic staff and heads of research laboratories:</b> 1. Clip of the faculty and the department 2. Presentations of the departmental research laboratories: Prof. Ofira Einstein – Neurobiology of Exercise Training Laboratory Prof. Shmuel Springer - Neuromuscular & Human Performance Laboratory Prof. Jay R. Hoffman – Applied Physiology lab Dr. Silyi Frenkel-Toledo - Brain and Motor Behavior Laboratory Dr. Orit Elion - Motor-Perceptual Skill Acquisition & Postural Control Laboratory Dr. Amit Abraham - Mental Imagery & Human Performance Laboratory

\* The heads of the institution and academic unit or their representatives will not attend these meetings.

\*\*\* The visit will be conducted in English with the exception of students who may speak in Hebrew and anyone else who feels unable to converse in English.

\*\*\* the virtual tour refers to the recording sent by the institution prior to the visit



Monday, February 15th, 2021

17:00-18:00	Meeting with senior academic staff * (including academic heads of programs)	Prof. Tamar Jacob, Prof. Meir Lotan, Dr. Alon Rabin, Dr. Zvi Kozol, Dr. Noa Ben-Ami, Dr. Michal Azmon, Dr. Noa Raphaely Beer, Mr. Ron Shavit
<b>18:00-18:15</b>	<b>break</b>	
18:15-18:45	Meeting with Adjunct academic staff *	<b>Adjunct academic staff:</b> Mr. Yuval David, Mrs. Sharon <u>Rozenman</u> , Mr. <u>Zvika</u> Katz, Mrs. <u>Noit</u> Inbar, Dr. Joseph <u>Milbaum</u> , Prof. Nahum Halperin
18:15-18:45	Meeting with instructors/Clinical instructors/Clinical center heads (in relevant disciplines)*	<b>Senior academic staff and clinical affiliation coordinator:</b> Mrs. Iris Fisher <b>Adjunct academic staff and clinical instructors:</b> Mr. Tal Shemesh, Mr. Vitaly Rosenfeld, Mrs. <u>Galit</u> <u>Cremisi</u>
<b>18:45-19:00</b>	<b>break</b>	
19:00-19:30	Meeting with BA students**	<b>B.P.T. students:</b> ***
19:00-19:30	Meeting with Alumni**	<b>Alumni:</b> ***
19:30-20:00	Meeting with MA students**	<b>M.Sc students:</b> ***
19:30-20:00	Meeting with Ph.D students**	<b>Ph.D students</b> ***

\* The heads of the institution and academic unit or their representatives will not attend these meetings.

\*\*\* The visit will be conducted in English with the exception of students who may speak in Hebrew and anyone else who feels unable to converse in English.

\*\*\* the virtual tour refers to the recording sent by the institution prior to the visit