



# EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL THERAPY  
DEPARTMENTS IN ISRAEL

April 2021

## 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
  - Haifa University
- 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 Bialistok 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.
  - submit to the CHE a general report regarding the evaluated field of study within the Israeli system of higher education.

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

- 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 one-day visit to each of the institutions.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.6 This report deals with the **Department of physical Therapy at The University of Haifa**. The Committee's visit to **The University of Haifa (via Zoom)** took place on **7-8/3/2021**. 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.

The committee would like to thank the faculty and leadership at Haifa University for submitting an outstanding self-study report that was comprehensive, well-written, and demonstrated a substantive self-evaluation of the Department of Physical Therapy. We noted no management or administrative concerns within the document or during our visit. In addition, the committee believes that the Department of Physical Therapy at Haifa University is doing an outstanding job of meeting its mission of educating physical therapy students at the bachelorette and master's degree levels. The Department is fortunate to have a hard-working faculty that is committed to training outstanding physical therapist clinicians and researchers. Common to all Israeli programs, other than when faculty members are being considered for promotion or tenure, the yearly evaluation of faculty performance is informal. The committee recommends developing and implementing a yearly assessment of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service.

Although the BPT program is rigorous and challenging, several areas were identified during our visit for improvement. It was noted by several individuals that the BPT students would benefit from better clinical reasoning skills, particularly during their early clinical rotations. Several specific recommendations are made to address this area of potential improvement. Also, like all PT programs in Israel, there is a need to eliminate courses with a small number of credit hours. In addition, it was noted that the curriculum is not completely evidence based and that a review of the current

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<sup>2</sup> Prof. Yocheved (Yochy) Laufer did not participate in the visits to the University of Haifa or in the panel's discussions concerning the evaluation of this institution.

curriculum to reflect contemporary practice more closely, including a greater emphasis on interprofessional education, is warranted. Finally, we note the need for inclusion of a professional behavior's assessment within the curriculum.

A major concern in the area of research of the Department is the lack of significant grant support from a major funding agency. The committee believes that the hiring of additional clinician scientists into the Department is necessary to address this concern. The proposed completion of additional teaching and research space for use by the Department is critical for the Department to be successful in any future hiring of research-oriented faculty.

### **Section 3: Observations**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The mission of the University of Haifa is to foster academic excellence in an atmosphere of tolerance and multiculturalism, which drives their student body to new levels of understanding and preparedness for a global workforce. The vision is to be a research university that is founded on the principles of academic quality and excellence, ranking among the top universities in Israel and worldwide in its fields of activities.

The University of Haifa implements their strategies through the following actions:

1. The University will recruit excellent scholars and provide its faculty with facilities and means to achieve first-rate research;
2. The University will continue to develop innovative, multidisciplinary learning programs, and broad international collaboration;
3. The University will provide its students with tools to create, understand, and implement the knowledge they acquire, through nurturing of universal and humanistic fundamental values.

The Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, the parent entity of the Department of Physical Therapy reflects the mission of the University. The Faculty aspires to:

1. Combine theoretical studies with field work;
2. Train professionals in the areas of social welfare and health who lead social welfare and health services and will be leaders in all aspects of development and implementation of public policy;
3. Advance professional and applied knowledge;
4. Provide an environment that will allow our researchers to conduct pioneering studies and contribute to the scientific community;
5. Support academic and professional endeavors in a manner that will benefit the community while also promoting social justice within it;
6. Nurture professional quality leadership;
7. Foster multidisciplinary professionalism through academic excellence and innovation in research, implementation of an interdisciplinary approach, and

emphasizing the interaction between social involvement and scientific knowledge;

The Department of Physical Therapy 's mission is for their graduates to be lifelong learners, with multidisciplinary skills, professional and ethical clinicians, involvement in the National Physical Therapy Association and in a specific interest group, and involvement in the community to promote public health and prevention. The aim to accomplish this through fostering an interdisciplinary approach, multiculturalism, ongoing professional training, advanced theoretical and applied research, innovative teaching, maintenance of existing laboratories, and through community interaction.

### **3.2 Management and Administration**

The Department of Physical Therapy operates as 1 of 10 Departments in the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences at Haifa University. The head of the Department reports to the Dean of the Faculty of Social Welfare and 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. The Head of the Department and the faculty demonstrated close and clear communication in both the self-evaluation document and during the interviews. The University and Department leadership is to be commended for a comprehensive self-study that clearly indicated self-reflection and consideration of all aspects of management and administration of the Department of Physical Therapy.

The Department of Physical Therapy has 2 programs; the Bachelor's in Physical Therapy (BPT) program and the Master's of Science (MScPT) program. The MScPT offers a specialization in 'Physical Activity, Exercise and Health", which is unique to Haifa University and across universities in Israel. The head of the BPT program is a physical therapist. The MScPT has both a thesis and non-thesis tracks and is also directed by a physical therapist. The Department of Physical Therapy has a large body of students across 2 programs; in the 2018/2019 years there are 155 in the BPT and 31 students in the MScPT program. The Department has 10 faculty (9.5 full-time equivalent), and 4 support staff. The Departmental structure appears appropriate for the current structure and programs. Leadership appears committed, respected and strong.

**Recommendations:** None

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

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

The University of Haifa's faculty and staff should be congratulated for submitting a self-evaluation document that was comprehensive, clear, well designed, and meaningful to the review team. It is clear that the University has an internal assessment culture and that the self-evaluation was reflective of the department.

Contributions from the Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation were quite clear. The document included the mission and goals of the parent institution, the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences as well as the Department of Physical Therapy. In discussions with the faculty it was clear that all senior faculty members and staff participated and were engaged in the self-evaluation process. The staff noted that through considerable dialogue and discussion, consensus was reached on all major points outlined in the document. The self-evaluation report adequately addressed the outstanding recommendations from the previous external review. The self-evaluation report included a variety of documents associated with the day to day operations of the Department of Physical Therapy. We felt that the document was self-reflective and the Department is to be commended on their efforts.

**Recommendations:** None

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

### 3.4 Study program, teaching and learning

#### BPT Program

Based on our review of the BPT curriculum presented in the self-evaluation report and honest feedback from clinical instructors, students, alumni, it is clear that the BPT students are presented with a rigorous and challenging program that provides them with the essential knowledge and skills that they need to become successful clinicians. All the students we met with agreed that they would highly recommend the program to others and are most appreciative of the outstanding, approachable, and responsive faculty.

Nevertheless, the program can be improved. All groups interviewed agreed that the Haifa University BPT students do not demonstrate a high level of clinical reasoning skills, particularly during their early clinical rotations. While the review committee agrees that this is a skill that develops over years of clinical practice, we believe that some exposure to patients prior to the commencement of the students' first full-time clinical rotation would be helpful.

**Recommendation (Important):** The faculty should require PT observational experiences (can be as a volunteer or as a paid aide) for all candidates as part of the BPT application process. This would guarantee that all students have had prior exposure to patients and have observed the patient-therapist relationship prior to their first clinical rotation.

**Recommendation (Important):** The Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences currently runs the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center (ICC) to provide diagnosis and treatment services in the areas of physical and mental health from an interdisciplinary perspective for vulnerable and at-risk populations. An expansion of the ICC to provide PT services or the creation of a new physical therapy clinic that is managed by the Department of Physical Therapy is needed to provide opportunities for short-term student training experiences for BPT students prior to their full-time

rotations. This clinic will also provide increased opportunities for student (see comments from MScPT alumni below) and faculty research.

The committee noted that recent efforts were made to consolidate courses into larger frameworks in the BPT program; however, there remain many courses with smaller credit hours. Multiple smaller courses demand additional resources from the department for scheduling and creating unique syllabi and assessments. Similarly, they are burdensome on the students because they require multiple unique assessments. Further, some courses such as PNF, may include dated principles that may not stand up in an evidence-based curriculum. In addition, it appears that there may be too great an emphasis on Pediatric courses within the curriculum. Both the current students and alumni suggested modifications to the curriculum to place more emphasis on the patient populations most commonly seen by physical therapists, such as patients with orthopedic, sports, and neurological injuries. They also suggested offering courses such as business development or marketing to reflect the current trend in Israel toward greater private clinic operations. During our discussions, it seems that courses are created based on faculty expertise, more so than changes in the professional scope of practice.

**Recommendation (Essential):** We recommend that a comprehensive review of the curriculum be undertaken within 1 year. The process must include all appropriate stakeholders including the faculty (full-time and adjunct), clinical instructors, students, alumni, and an external consultant. The review must result in an action plan that is implemented in a timely manner.

Despite the University's goal to develop innovative, multidisciplinary learning programs, and broad international collaborations, it is clear that there are missed opportunities for interprofessional education (IPE) within the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences. Alumni have indicated that there are rarely opportunities to work with other professions and that exposure to other programs does not occur until the students' full-time clinical experiences. An onsite, interdisciplinary clinic would aid in exposure to other programs, especially if this is embedded into the program.

**Recommendation (Important):** The program should provide meaningful IPE experiences for BPT students that involve students for the other current and planned programs within the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences.

The BPT program includes two 6-week and two 8-week clinical rotations. Both the clinical instructors and current students agreed that the 6-week rotations are too short, and should be expanded to 8-weeks. This will give the students an opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills during the rotation.

**Recommendation (Desired):** The Department should consider expanding all clinical rotations to 8 weeks in duration.

Professional behaviors are a core element of a professional program. These include core elements such as accountability, altruism, compassion/caring, integrity, professional duty, and social responsibility, but also involve the day-to-day

appropriateness of interactions with faculty, students and staff. These behaviors go well beyond cognitive knowledge and psychomotor skills, and are the underpinnings of communication with the future patient. It is clear that although the Department values these student characteristics, there is no formal professional behaviors assessment and scoring strategy for the department. By not evaluating professional behaviors, students cannot be held accountable in the same way they are for their academic performance. This place the director of clinical education and the department in a precarious situation.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Adopt a professional behaviors assessment form and perform periodic assessments of students during practical examinations, case studies, and day-to-day interactions within the Department of Physical Therapy.

### MScPT Program

The MScPT students and alumni with whom we met were all very satisfied with the training received within the master's program. They all praised their primary advisors, and the outstanding professional relationships developed. Overall, they described the Department as having "wonderful human resources." All students reported working either half- or full-time during their master's training. Several students report receiving University funded scholarships that were most helpful in supporting their thesis work. The students noted that beyond the financial benefits, the scholarships serve as a "reward and motivation" for their hard work within the program. The MScPT alumni noted a lack of courses available in certain practice areas such as the treatment of neurological patients and in technical scientific writing. It was also noted that the lack of an affiliated hospital or medical center is a weakness of the program, but this can be addressed if the Department had its own PT clinic.

**Recommendation (Desired):** As the Department's faculty attempts to grow the MScPT programs they should consider offering additional practice based advanced courses and a writing course within the curriculum.

**Recommendation (Desired):** As noted above, the Department of Physical Therapy should move toward offering physical therapy clinical services within Haifa University.

### PhD Program

Though the PhD Program has not yet been begun, several important issues related to the proposed program were raised. First, as suggested by the MScPT alumni, although the Department has outstanding faculty members who are ready to mentor PhD students, the physical facilities are not yet adequate. Also, although the Department Head noted that the Department plans to offer only one new course to support the PhD program, we believe that opening a PhD program will require a great deal of work on an already busy faculty. Finally, additional scholarship funding will be needed to support these new graduate students.

**Recommendations (Important):** As noted below related infrastructure, additional research faculty positions will be needed if the Department is to maintain the high quality BPT and master's program it currently offers. Additionally, laboratory and office space will be needed both to support additional PhD students and any new



faculty that are hired. Finally, the Department must work with the Dean and Rector to secure additional scholarship support for the PhD program.

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

### 3.5 Teaching and Learning

The culture of striving to provide an optimal learning environment is evident in the self-evaluation document and during our interviews. Faculty are dedicated to ensuring the learning environment and teaching is at the highest level. There is a teaching committee that makes recommendations for smaller decisions like finding a new teacher, determining who will teach content. The Department Council is responsible for larger decisions regarding changes such as add/delete content or a course. The Department Council consists of all academic and clinical heads, and they meet every 5 weeks to discuss issues.

Several groups that we met with noted a weakness in clinical reasoning. Alumni also suggested that the problem-based learning strategies (which is presently in 1 course) should be expanded throughout the curriculum. They felt that this was the primary time that theory was incorporated into a clinical implementation objective.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Incorporate Problem Based Learning (PBL) principles in multiple courses throughout the curriculum.

The department has published dedicated student learning outcomes identified as intended learning outcomes (ILO) in the self-evaluation. When queried, there appears to be no formal process for measuring these ILOs outside of traditional classroom activities and assessment. There also appears to be no formal progression of ILOs as students matriculate through the program.

**Recommendations (Important):** Adopt a formal assessment of ILOs throughout the four years, record the findings, and modify the program accordingly.

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

### 3.6 Faculty

There are 10 faculty members in the Department of Physical Therapy at Haifa University. The majority of academic faculty are physical therapists, providing strong support for educating BPT students in the art and science of physical therapy practice. All faculty we met with were passionate about education for both the BPT and MScPT students. The self-evaluation documents and interviews demonstrated a culture of collegiality and collaboration among the faculty that included the academic, clinical, and adjunct faculty. "Family" was consistently used to describe the feeling among the faculty. It is clear that this faculty is passionate and dedicated to the program and the students. The faculty and self-evaluation report described a culture of regular

meetings in the Department that allow for open discussion. An agenda is created by the Head of Department and any faculty member can add items to the agenda.

Faculty are evaluated yearly for teaching effectiveness largely by student evaluations. If student evaluations indicate that there are deficiencies, then recommendations are made by the Head of the Department to improve. Recommendations can include: attending sponsored workshops, having individual consultations by the Unit for the Advancement of Teaching, and consulting with the teaching committee. Interviews with faculty indicated when they have sought out these resources and that they have been helpful to improve their teaching, especially during COVID and the challenges it posed with teaching. Peer evaluations of teaching are performed mainly for adjunct faculty.

**Recommendation (Desired):** Peer evaluations may be helpful for all faculty. The department may consider peer evaluations to substantiate student evaluation findings and to provide additional assessment of teaching.

Yearly comprehensive evaluations of faculty performance on teaching, service, and scholarship are somewhat informal with the Head of the Department. All faculty may benefit from standard yearly evaluations for all aspects of the faculty profile of teaching, research and service as appropriate for each faculty's current status.

**Recommendation (Important):** Develop and implement a formal yearly assessment of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service. 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.

There are a variety of clinical (adjunct) faculty, who work in area clinics and teach part-time in their area of expertise. The clinical faculty reported they feel very much a part of the program and supported by the Department. They described a culture of free and regular exchange with the full-time academic faculty on informal and formal assessments of the curriculum. The self-evaluation report describes, and the adjunct faculty concurred, the integration of the adjunct faculty in decision-making in the division regarding the classes they teach. Adjunct faculty meet with the teaching committee when courses need modification and they participate in the reorganization with other courses in the curriculum. The adjunct faculty members do not regularly attend Departmental faculty meetings.

**Recommendation (Important):** Extend invitations to adjunct faculty members to attend at least one faculty meeting per semester to facilitate regular communication and exchange of ideas regarding the BPT curriculum, Departmental activities and decision-making activities. The meeting can be in-person or virtual.

The Department of Physical Therapy has plans to increase the enrollment of MScPT students by opening new programs/tracks, as well as the development of a PhD program. Both of these efforts appear warranted and are supported by the review committee. In particular we believe that the creation of the PhD program within the

Department of Physical Therapy will substantially increase the research productivity of the current faculty and will enable the recruitment of additional research-oriented faculty.

**Recommendation (Important):** Hire 3 new faculty members within the next 3 - 5 years to support the expansion of the MScPT program and the creation of a PhD program. An additional 0.5 administrative staff position will also be needed to support the new PhD program.

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

### 3.7 Research

The Department notes that its major weakness in research is the lack of significant grant support from major funding agencies. The Dean appears to be a very strong supporter for increasing the research productivity of the Department. We were pleased to note that the Dean is committed to hiring three additional outstanding clinician scientists who are excellent researchers into the Department. The Dean meets annually in a private session with each faculty member who is a candidate to become a senior lecturer to identify their needs, provide advice, and to match faculty members with successful senior staff to serve as mentors. The faculty described these efforts as being most helpful.

The review committee notes that several faculty members within the Department have the potential to secure major funding. Thus, the Department Head and Dean's continued support for the research efforts of the faculty, including small grants/seed money is essential and warranted. Another critical component to improving the research productivity is the approval of the proposed PhD program within the Department and the recruitment of outstanding graduate students.

**Recommendation (Important):** All faculty members should develop collaborations with senior researchers who have strong funding histories to develop their publication records and the skills needed to write successful grants.

**Recommendation (Important):** The recruitment of 3 additional clinician scientists into the Department who have the training, experience, and potential to secure large research grants is essential to increase the Department's funding level. This is a challenge for Physical Therapy Departments both in Israel and throughout the world. Thus, the administration must realize that this may be a long-term objective that may take years to fulfill. Securing adequate start-up funds and research space will be critical for attracting appropriate applicants. The ultimate recruitment of outstanding PhD students who are then encouraged to do post-doctoral training in the US or Europe may eventually help to provide a pipeline of capable faculty to the Department and throughout Israel.

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

### **3.8 Students**

BPT and Master's students uniformly praised the commitment and support of the faculty toward their professional education. The master's student reported identifying Haifa as a destination school, even when educated at another university for their BPT degree. BPT students reported excellent, respectful relationships with the current faculty and a deep respect for their efforts. This was also reinforced by the alumni. We commend the faculty for the culture that they have cultivated.

It is apparent from the psychometric scores and discussion with students and faculty, that the University of Haifa's physical therapy program is a destination school (preferred) in Israel. On average, student psychometrics scores are very high. Students who score above a dedicated threshold are allowed to bypass a traditional interview and are offered admission. Students who clear the recommended threshold are offered an interview, which is described by the faculty as a mechanism to recruit students to Haifa. Even with the high level of applicants (and number) the department has a dedicated diversity strategy that involves including a small number of Ethiopian and Arab students who may not have been as competitive on the psychometric admissions scores. We uniformly appreciate these efforts and hope that the department maintains this as an ongoing focus.

There appears to be a high dropout rate of students within the BPT program. The report shows that it is ~10% to 20% for each cohort admitted to the BPT program (see Table 6, p. 101 of the 2019 self-evaluation report). This issue was discussed with several groups and all agreed that the lack of understanding of the rigor of the program and the nature of contemporary practice of physical therapy in Israel contributed to the student drop out. Another reason may involve the low number of students who observe prior to matriculation and the department's policy which does not require observation hours. Students recommended that the department consider interviewing all students. They felt that those who scored above the psychometric threshold required to interview often lacked context about the program and the profession.

**Recommendation (Important):** Require observation hours prior to applying to the program and require interviews for all students (remote or onsite) including those high psychometric scores before offering matriculation.

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

### **3.9 Infrastructure**

Currently, the faculty offices and research laboratory are located across multiple floors within the Eshkol Tower. The Department's main office and 7 of the faculty member's offices are located on the 9th floor and 3 faculty member's offices are on the 6th floor. Only 3 faculty members have private offices (including the Department Head). The other 7 faculty members share the three remaining offices. The Department's only laboratory space, which is multidisciplinary and shared by most of the academic staff members, is located at the 2nd floor of the Eshkol Tower. The Department's classrooms are located in the Terrace Building. Though the faculty have made these arrangements work, it is far from ideal.

The Department will be moving into a new building - the Faculty Building - within the next year. The Dean and Rector noted that this first building will only provide office space for faculty members. There are plans for two additional buildings that will eventually provide the much-needed additional office, teaching, and research space for the entire Faculty.

**Recommendation (Important):** Completion of additional teaching and research space is requisite if the Department is to attract and retain world class researchers and PhD students. Funding for the construction of the 2 new buildings planned for the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences must become a priority for the University.

In addition to a new PhD in physical therapy, the Dean indicated a goal for developing new programs within the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences. These include proposed programs in pharmacy, technology and health, and physician assistant. The Rector indicated that these are "ideas" at this point, but that the long-term plan does reflect the mission, which includes growth in the areas of health sciences. The Rector indicated that they would identify space on the campus to cover growth in new programs if these occurred before the development of 2 additional buildings.

**Recommendation (Essential):** Prior to additional new program development, complete space planning to assure adequate teaching, office, and research space for both the existing and any newly recruited faculty members and students.

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

#### **Section 4: Recommendations**

##### **Essential**

1. We recommend that a comprehensive review of the curriculum be undertaken within 1 year. The process must include all appropriate stakeholders including the faculty (full-time and adjunct), clinical instructors, students,

- alumni, and an external consultant. The review must result in an action plan that is implemented in a timely manner.
2. Adopt a professional behaviors assessment form and perform periodic assessments of students during practical examinations, case studies, and day-to-day interactions within the Department of Physical Therapy.
  3. Incorporate Problem Based Learning (PBL) principles in multiple courses throughout the curriculum.
  4. Prior to additional new program development, complete space planning to assure adequate teaching, office, and research space for both the existing and any newly recruited faculty members and students.

### **Important**

1. The faculty should require PT observational experiences (can be as a volunteer or as a paid aide) for all candidates as part of the BPT application process. This would guarantee that all students have had prior exposure to patients and have observed the patient-therapist relationship prior to their first clinical rotation.
2. The Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences currently runs the Interdisciplinary Clinical Center (ICC) to provide diagnosis and treatment services in the areas of physical and mental health from an interdisciplinary perspective for vulnerable and at-risk populations. An expansion of the ICC to provide PT services or the creation of a new physical therapy clinic that is managed by the Department of Physical Therapy is needed to provide opportunities for short-term student training experiences for BPT students prior to their full-time rotations. This clinic will also provide increased opportunities for student (see comments from MScPT alumni below) and faculty research.
3. The program should provide meaningful IPE experiences for BPT students that involve students for the other current and planned programs within the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences.
4. As noted below related infrastructure, additional research faculty positions will be needed if the Department is to maintain the high quality BPT and master's program it currently offers. Additionally, laboratory and office space will be needed both to support additional PhD students and any new faculty that are hired. Finally, the Department must work with the Dean and Rector to secure additional scholarship support for the PhD program.
5. Adopt a formal assessment of ILOs throughout the four years, record the findings, and modify the program accordingly.
6. Develop and implement a formal yearly assessment of faculty performance for teaching, research, and service. 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.
7. Extend invitations to adjunct faculty members to attend at least one faculty meeting per semester to facilitate regular communication and exchange of ideas regarding the BPT curriculum, Departmental activities and decision-making activities. The meeting can be in-person or virtual.
  8. Hire 3 new faculty members within the next 3 - 5 years to support the expansion of the MScPT program and the creation of a PhD program. An additional 0.5 administrative staff position will also be needed to support the new PhD program.
  9. All faculty members should develop collaborations with senior researchers who have strong funding histories to develop their publication records and the skills needed to write successful grants.
  10. The recruitment of 3 additional clinician scientists into the Department who have the training, experience, and potential to secure large research grants is essential to increase the Department's funding level. This is a challenge for Physical Therapy Departments both in Israel and throughout the world. Thus, the administration must realize that this may be a long-term objective that may take years to fulfill. Securing adequate start-up funds and research space will be critical for attracting appropriate applicants. The ultimate recruitment of outstanding PhD students who are then encouraged to do post-doctoral training in the US or Europe may eventually help to provide a pipeline of capable faculty to the Department and throughout Israel.
  11. Require observation hours prior to applying to the program and require interviews for all students (remote or onsite) including those high psychometric scores before offering matriculation.
  12. Completion of additional teaching and research space is requisite if the Department is to attract and retain world class researchers and PhD students. Funding for the construction of the 2 new buildings planned for the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences must become a priority for the University.

### **Desired**

1. The Department should consider expanding all clinical rotations to 8 weeks in duration.
2. As the Department's faculty attempts to grow the MScPT programs they should consider offering additional practice based advanced courses and a writing course within the curriculum.
3. As noted above, the Department of Physical Therapy should move toward offering physical therapy clinical services within Haifa University.

4. Peer evaluations may be helpful for all faculty. The department may consider peer evaluations to substantiate student evaluation findings and to provide additional assessment of teaching.

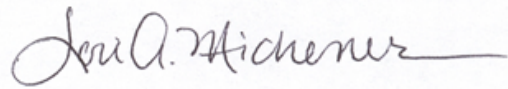


**Signed by:**



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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



לשכת הרקטור  
היחידה להערכת איכות אקדמית  
**Office of the Rector**  
**Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation**

החוג לפיזיותרפיה  
הפקולטה למדעי הרווחה והבריאות  
**Faculty of Social welfare and Health Sciences**  
**Department of Physical Therapy**

### Physical Therapy Committee – Schedule of online visit

- The visit will be divided into 2 half days
- Meetings are conducted in a Q&A format

Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

[Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99740814521?pwd=Y1JYYmtWSTA4S3VpN29SL2NGUG1Mdz09>]

Time	Subject	Participants
17:00-17:30	Meeting with the Dean of Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences	<b>Prof. Faisal Azaiza</b> , Dean, Faculty of Social welfare and Health Sciences
17:30-17:40	Presentation by the Head of the Department of Physical Therapy*	<b>Dr. Gali Dar</b> , PT- Head, Department of Physical Therapy
17:40-18:30	Meeting with the Head of the Department of Physical Therapy (Q&A)*	<b>Prof. Eliezer Carmeli</b> , PT- Former Department Head
18:30-18:45	Break	
18:45-19:45	Meeting with senior academic staff* (including academic heads of programs)	<p><b>Dr. Osnat Atun-Einy</b>, PT- Pediatric Physical Therapy, Motor Development; Head, Pediatric Division</p> <p><b>Dr. Michal Elboim-Gabyzon</b>, PT- Electro-Physical Agents in Rehabilitation, Acute Orthopedic Care, Geriatric Rehabilitation; Student advisor, BPT program</p> <p><b>Dr. Yoav Gimmon</b>, PT- Vestibular physiology and Vestibular rehabilitation</p> <p><b>Dr. Michal Kafri</b>, PT- Motor Learning, Neurologic Rehabilitation, Stroke recovery</p> <p><b>Dr. Einat Kodesh</b>, PT- Exercise Physiology, Human Performance, Exercise and Chronic Disease; Head, MScPT program; Head, Physical Activity, Exercise and Health Specialization</p> <p><b>Dr. Tal Krasovsky</b>, Aging Neurological Disease, Gait</p> <p><b>Dr. Hilla Sarig Bahat</b>, PT- Musculoskeletal physical therapy spine; Head, Orthopedic Division</p> <p><b>Prof. Irit Weissman-Fogel</b>, PT- Pain neurophysiology and pathophysiology, Brain Imaging</p>

**Monday, March 8th, 2021**

[Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99740814521?pwd=Y1JlYmtWSTA4S3VpN295L2NGUG1Mdz09>]

Time	Subject	Participants
17:00-17:30	Meeting with the heads of the institution	<b>Prof. Gustavo Mesh</b> , Rector <b>Ms. Ruchama Elad-Yarum</b> , Manager, Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation <b>Ms. Noy Snir</b> , Unit for Academic Quality Evaluation
17:30-18:00 (parallel session; see following session)	Meeting with Adjunct academic staff*	<b>Ms. Netta Beyar</b> , PT- Women's health; BPT course <b>Dr. Maya Cale'-Benzoor</b> , PT- Kinesiology and sport injuries; BPT & MScPT courses <b>Ms. Badira Naamneh-Abuelhija</b> , PT- Orthopedic & Respiratory Rehabilitation, Health Promotion; BPT courses <b>Ms. Shira Rotshild</b> , PT- Assistive Technology; BPT course
17:30-18:00 (parallel session; see above session)	Meeting with instructors/Clinical instructors/Clinical center heads (in relevant disciplines)*	<b>Ms. Zahava Davidow</b> , PT- Director of Clinical Education and Teaching Fellow <b>Mr. David Ben-Elisha</b> , PT- Clinical instructor <b>Ms. Efrat Gajst</b> , PT- Clinical instructor <b>Ms. Danielle Hurvitz</b> , PT- Clinical instructor <b>Ms. Shani Moritz</b> , PT- Clinical instructor
18:00-18:15	break	
18:15-18:45	Meeting with BPT students**	
18:45-19:15	Meeting with MScPT students**	
19:15-19:30	break	

Time	Subject	Participants
19:30-20:00	Meeting with Alumni	

**Committee Members:**

- ❖ **Prof. Stuart Binder-Macleod**, Associate Vice President for Clinical and Translational Research, Delaware Clinical and Translational Research ACCEL Program, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Delaware, USA – Committee Chair
- ❖ **Prof. Lori Michener**, Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy, University of Southern California, USA
- ❖ **Prof. Chad E. Cook**, Division of Physical Therapy, Department of Orthopaedics, Duke University, USA
- **Prof. Yocheved (Yochy) Laufer** (Emeritus), Department of Physical Therapy, University of Haifa, Israel
- ❖ Visiting Committee Members

**CHE Representative:**

- **Mr. Yarden Bialistok**, Quality Assessment Division – Committee Coordinator