



**Committee for the Evaluation of Political Science and International  
Relations Programs**

**Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Departments of Political Science & International Relations**

**September 2011**

Dear Members of the Council for Higher Education,

In November 2010, the CHE approved the composition of the committee the Minister of Education, who serves ex officio as a Chairperson of the CHE, appointed the following committee to evaluate Political Science & International Relations Studies in Israel:

- **Prof. Thomas Risse, Otto Suhr Institute for Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany– Committee Chair**
- **Prof. Gabriel Ben Dor, School of Political Sciences, University of Haifa, Israel<sup>1</sup>**
- **Prof. Benjamin Jerry Cohen, Department of Political Science, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA**
- **Prof. Abraham Diskin, Department of Political Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel and Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy, and Strategy, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel<sup>2</sup>**
- **Prof. Galia Golan, Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel<sup>3</sup>**
- **Prof. Ellen Immergut, School of Social Sciences, Humboldt University Berlin, Germany<sup>4</sup>**
- **Prof. Robert Lieber, Department of Government, Georgetown University, USA<sup>5</sup>**
- **Ms. Marissa Gross, Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.**

Within the framework of its activity, the committee was requested to:

\*Examine the self-evaluation reports, which were submitted by institutions that provide study programs in Political Science and International Relations.

\*Present the CHE with final reports for the evaluated academic units and study programs – a separate report for each institution, including the committee's findings and recommendations.

\*Submit to the CHE a general report regarding its opinion as to the examined field within the Israeli system of higher education with recommended standards.

The committee evaluated Political Science & International Relations departments at the following institutions: Bar Ilan University, Ben Gurion University, Interdisciplinary Center, Open University, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv Yaffo Academic College, University of Haifa. The Departments of Political Science & International Rela-

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Gabriel Ben Dor did not participate in the evaluation of University of Haifa.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Abraham Diskin did not participate in the evaluation of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya. Prof. Diskin did not participate in the preparation of this letter on Hebrew University.

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Galia Golan did not participate in the evaluation of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya. Prof. Golan did not participate in the preparation of this letter on Hebrew University.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Ellen Immergut did not participate in the visits of Open University, Ben Gurion University, and Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya.

<sup>5</sup> Prof. Robert Lieber did not participate in the first round of visits.

tions at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem were originally included in the review process. However, due to the fact that the two departments were evaluated by an external committee commissioned by the university itself in 2007, the departments were excused from participating in the CHE's QA evaluation.

The committee decided, however, based on the importance of the departments at Hebrew University to the fields of Political Science & International Relations in Israeli academia, and to assure the implementation of the 2007 committee's recommendation, that it was critical to receive an implementation report from the Hebrew University. The committee greatly thanks the senior administration of Hebrew University, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the two departments for their cooperation in this matter. In this document, the committee analyses the implementation process at the Hebrew University based on the 2007 committee's report and the letter of May 9, 2011, sent to the committee by the Dean of the Social Sciences Faculty, Prof. Avner de Shalit, on behalf of the university (both documents are included in the annex).

The 2007 Committee's report established four goals for the Departments of Political Science and International Relations with a number of recommendations pertaining to each goal. We organize our document accordingly.

**1. Goal:** *Renew and develop the Departments of Political Science and International Relations as major departments in Israel and internationally, especially by fostering new synergies between the two departments and between them and the School of Public Policy and surrounding centers. (2007 Report, p. 5)*

To accomplish this goal, the 2007 Committee recommended jointly appointed clusters of (particularly mid-career tenured) faculty and a joint graduate program between the two Departments. Priority should be given to recruitments in international political economy, security studies, and the study of international institutions, including scholars who use models or statistical data. The 2007 Committee also recommended that the resources of the Davis and Gilo Centers could be more effectively deployed, particularly with regard to channeling funds into research grants for faculty and graduate students, and a special emphasis on funding collaborative projects that include graduate students and junior faculty members.

*Evaluation of the 2011 CHE appointed Committee:*

According to the letter by Dean de Shalit, this goal has only partially been met. There seems to be enhanced cooperation between the two departments, for example with regard to departmental seminars. There have also been new hires in the fields of political philosophy, in political behavior, and in political psychology (in the Department of Political Science). In addition, the department seeks to hire new faculty in methodology, one of the major weaknesses which the 2007 Committee identified.

However, the main recommendations of the 2007 report to meet the goals of enhanced cooperation between the two departments have not been met. There have been no new appointments in the fields of international political economy, security studies, and international institutions in the Department of International Relations. As a result, the student-to-faculty ratio in the Department of IR continues to worsen (see below). Moreover, the letter by the dean does not indicate that joint appointments between the two departments have been made. We, therefore, recommend that the additional appointments in the Department of IR suggested already four years ago, be pursued as soon as possible.

In addition, while we realize that the 2007 Committee did not recommend merging the two departments at the time, our group comes to a different conclusion four years later. At the moment, the unusual organizational structure of separate Departments of International Relations and Political Science can only be understood historically. International Relations, Domestic and Comparative Government, and Political Theory are all sub-fields of political science. To separate International Relations into an independent department, while combining Comparative Politics and Political Theory into another does not make sense to us. Furthermore, growing bodies of research are found at the intersection of International Relations and Political Theory, International Relations and Comparative Politics, as well as International Relations and Public Administration/Organizational Behavior. As a result, the committee suggests that the two Departments consider merging into one, e.g. a Department of Political Science and International Relations.

- 2. Goal:** *To enhance graduate education by institutionalizing cooperation between Political Science and International Relations, and by increasing levels of support for graduate students in all of the research MA and PhD tracks offered in both departments. (2007 report, p. 5)*

To accomplish this goal, the 2007 committee recommended that the cluster of jointly appointed faculty should supervise the joint research MA track and PhD in political science and international relations, that committees rather than individual faculty should supervise PhD students, and that junior faculty should be allowed to serve as primary advisors. Finally, increased resources should be devoted to support research MA students and PhD candidates.

*Evaluation of the 2011 CHE appointed Committee:*

As the letter by Dean de Shalit indicates, these recommendations have been carried out with much enthusiasm and there is now some sort of joint PhD program – called TELEM - of the two departments which also includes the School of Public Policy. Junior faculty in both departments can now serve as primary advisors. We congratulate these accomplishments and note that our recommended merger of the two departments would, of course, greatly facilitate this joint research MA and PhD program.

One remaining issue appears to be resources for scholarships for research MA and PhD students. As Dean de Shalit writes, the Department of Political Science devotes all its scholarship resources to the new PhD school, while the Department of International Relations can rely on money from the Davis Center. We recognize these efforts and want to point out that funding for PhD students is an Israel-wide problem which will be addressed in our general report. Yet, the committee feels that the two departments should actively seek additional funding sources for their PhD students.

- 3. Goal:** *To foster undergraduate programs that encourage language learning and study abroad; provide internships and orientations to career opportunities; and connect academic theories and skills to thinking about real-world problems and issues. (2007 Report, p. 6)*

To accomplish this goal, the 2007 Committee recommended that the BA program in International Relations should be relabeled “International Studies” and offer full cred-

it for language training and/or study abroad linked to joint majors. Both departments need more resources to support their large undergraduate programs, e.g. more teaching assistantships for basic introductory courses. Last but not least, courses tackling “real world problems,” internship opportunities, and career orientation workshops should also be strengthened.

*Evaluation of the 2011 CHE appointed Committee:*

Dean de Shalit’s letter indicates that some steps have been taken to accomplish this goal. The BA program in International Relations is about to be re-labeled “International Studies” and special money has been allocated to the Department of International Relations for their large undergraduate program. Full credit will be given for study abroad in the future, while credit for language training has not been approved by the university. In our view, this should be corrected and, in addition, the 2007 committee’s recommendations with regard to internships and career orientation workshops should be carried out.

Moreover, we are concerned about the deteriorating student-to-faculty ratio in the IR Department. In 2010-2011, this ratio was 35:1 and it is likely to get worse with the retirement of several senior faculty in the coming years. We recommend that replacements for retired faculty be sought pro-actively and ahead of time. In addition, we repeat the recommendation of the 2007 Committee that the Department needs at least four additional faculty in the fields of international political economy, security studies, and international institutions (see above).

**4. Goal:** *Enhance flexibility in the appointment of faculty and support for research in priority areas within and across departments. (2007 Report, p. 6)*

To realize these goals, the 2007 Committee recommended to offer departments and administrators better control over the shape as well as the quality of new appointments, planning for priority areas to allow the dedication of slots over multiple years, so that predictable searches can continue until a strong and available candidate is approved. Tenured appointments should be made possible at the Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor Levels (as is the case – we might add – at other Israeli universities). The 2007 committee also recommended that recruitments of scholars from abroad should be facilitated by allowing part-time appointments and relaxing the requirements to use Hebrew for teaching at the graduate level. Last not least, it was recommended that the pools for faculty positions should be broadened and that applicants should be sought from currently underrepresented groups, including women.

*Evaluation of the 2011 CHE appointed Committee:*

As the letter by Dean de Shalit points out, this goal has not yet been achieved. According to him, university rules are partly responsible for this, particularly with regard to hiring tenured faculty at the Senior Lecturer or Associate Professor levels. Hebrew University policies also do not allow for part-time appointments or for relaxing the requirement to teach in Hebrew so as to attract more faculty from abroad. The Dean did not comment on the recommendation by the 2007 Committee to actively seek applications from underrepresented groups, including women.

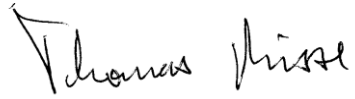
At this point, we can only reiterate the recommendations of the 2007 Committee with regard to these issues and ask the departments as well as Hebrew University to implement them in a timely fashion.

Finally, concerning the Department of IR and its worrisome situation, no change has been made with regard to offering departments more control over the hiring process. Departments still do not have dedicated slots to fill over multiple years, they still have to bring their chosen candidates to an appointment committee at the faculty level which then compares candidates across all social science departments. As a result, as the 2007 Committee report pointed out (p. 22), “there is a premium placed on finding ‘safe’ candidates who can prevail in inter-departmental competition who are sure to accept if they receive an offer.”

Once again, we can only repeat the observations of the 2007 Committee report with regard to this untenable situation. Four years later, the negative consequences of this recruitment practice have become obvious. It is not that we recommend that departments should seek “second-best” and less qualified candidates, of course not. But the current practice encourages not only bringing “safe” rather than excellent candidates before the appointment committee of the Social Science Faculty. The long and cumbersome hiring process is also likely to miss its stated goals of hiring “the best and the brightest,” because these candidates might accept other offers in an increasingly competitive job market, both in Israel and abroad.

We recommend, therefore, that particularly the Department of International Relations defines its hiring priorities in light of the coming retirements and its areas of needs (especially international political economy, security studies, and international institutions). It then needs to have confidence that, if it is successful in recruiting excellent candidates in these specialties, the Social Science Faculty and the University will indeed appoint these persons.

**Signed by:**



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Prof. Thomas Risse, Chair



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Prof. Gabriel Ben Dor



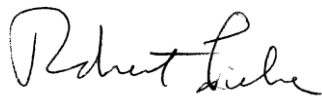
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Prof. Benjamin Jerry Cohen



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Prof. Ellen Immergut



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Prof. Robert Lieber