

GLOCAL: M.A. IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Evaluation Committee Report

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Introduction

The Evaluation Committee appointed to examine the M.A. program for International Community Development at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Glocal), consisting of Professor Tim Allen of the London School of Economics and Professor Naomi Chazan of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, read the "Self-Evaluation Program Report" prepared by the Glocal staff, a series of additional materials (including a full set of syllabi, curriculum vitae of faculty, biographies of participants and a list of internship partners). It also held a full day set of meetings on December 15, 2015, and held internal discussions in person and via email. In addition, Professor Allen had the opportunity to give a lecture and take questions with the current student intake. Throughout the process, the committee has been assisted efficiently and expeditiously by the Vice-Rector of the Hebrew University, Professor Barak Medina, as well as other staff associated with the program.

The Committee was impressed by the strong commitment of the faculty, staff and students and by the team spirit of all involved. This enthusiasm was evident both in their oral presentations, their written materials and the lively engagement which followed Professor Allen's lecture. On the latter occasion, discussion could have gone on for much longer. The intelligence and perception of those participating was impressive. It confirmed the view of the committee that there is care in the recruitment of suitable candidates who are strong academically, from a wide range of backgrounds, and who come from various parts of the world, as well as from Israel and the Palestinian territories. This diversity is unusual and contributes substantially to cross-fertilization in the classroom as well as to long-term networking. The Committee took special note of the care given to practical aspects of the program—especially to applied theory, to the transmission of broadly applicable practices and to the monitoring of internships in the field. It recognizes both the substantial professional and academic potential contained in the program and hopes that the suggestions presented in this evaluation can help to improve the program and facilitate its further development.

Glocal is currently at a crossroads. After absorbing six cohorts of students, its future depends on its institutionalization as an interdisciplinary unit within the Faculty of the Social Sciences at the Hebrew University and the simultaneous clarification of its

academic and applied mission. The following review and allied recommendations may be useful in achieving this goal.

A. Description of the Program

Glocal describes itself as "an international M.A. program in international community studies". Following a period of preparation, it opened its doors in 2011 within the framework of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Hebrew University. Since then its student body has more than doubled in size from 11 students from 3 countries to 25 students hailing from 22 countries throughout the world. It has successfully developed partnerships with major international development organizations and has an ongoing relationship with MASHAV (The Division for International Cooperation of the Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs) and with the Israeli Branch of SID (The Society for International Development).

The Glocal Program in International Community Development is constructed in three distinct segments over a period of 18 months. The first year is devoted to intense theoretical and practical instruction at the Hebrew University. The following four months are spent in carefully designed internships in the field. The final two months, back in Jerusalem, consist of an integrative seminar in which students critically reflect on their experiences and prepare a final paper. During the course of studies, students also participate in a specially designed lecture series and interact with each other in a variety of extracurricular activities.

Glocal is essentially a course in what is generally called 'development studies'. That is not quite clear from its title. As such, it is the only program on this important arena of research, scholarship and teaching in Israel. No other university in the country deals directly with international development in the same way, or with such concentration. Nor are there any other programs with such a high level of integration of an internationally-recruited student body within an existing Faculty.

Nevertheless, despite the substantial progress it has recorded since its establishment, Glocal's position in the Faculty of Social Sciences and the University is still ambiguous. It lacks formal standing and has yet to be institutionalized.

The committee recommends that in order to ensure its institutional position over time, the following steps be taken:

1. *The Glocal program should be recognized as a full-fledged interdisciplinary academic program within the Faculty of Social Sciences, preferably with independent standing and drawing on the resources of the disciplinary departments of the Faculty. The Committee considered the possibility of housing the program within an existing unit, such as the School of Public Administration, but after careful consideration prefers to recommend the*

- independent construct, in line with other cross-disciplinary degree-granting programs at the University and on a country-wide basis (such as the inter-university program in African Studies).*
2. *The program could benefit from the recruitment of a strong Advisory Committee of experts and practitioners in the field of development from Israel and abroad, which can assist in developing the program and fine-tuning its components.*
 3. *While the title 'Glocal' has become established at Hebrew University, development of the program might necessitate a change of name, to bring it in line with international norms.*

B. Mission Statement and Program Vision

The Glocal program has set for itself, in its written materials, three central objectives: 1) creating a new generation of highly-trained Israeli development professionals; 2) assisting in the formation of a similar cohort of development practitioners from low-income countries and marginalized communities; and 3) contributing to the design and implementation of innovative development strategies and practices through participation in the growing network of development experts.

At its inception, the program chose to develop its program around a vision of community-driven development which would ultimately induce more sustainable development on the macro level. The bottom-up approach was articulated in discussions with past and present directors of the program and with faculty and students. This approach, while well-grounded theoretically, inevitably favors practical training and has caused some discomfort amongst those responsible for the program (see page 5 of the Self-Evaluation Report).

It is the assessment of the Committee members that hesitations about the conceptualization of the program reflect an ambiguity about its mission, which is then translated into lack of clarity about the balance between theory and practice in the curriculum, and consequently about the place of research in its long-term design. In substantive terms, the committee notes the absence of a strong development theory focus in the conceptualization of the Glocal program and in its curriculum. To deal with the problems related to the identity of the program, the Committee therefore strongly urges the following measures:

1. *Changing the name of the program. The term 'Glocal' is an adjective that can neither stand alone in the English language nor properly mirror the mission of the program or its vision. A more appropriate name might be: The Program on Glocal International Development or, simply put, Glocal Development. Alternatively, it might be better to connect it more clearly with Development Studies. It might be called Development Studies in Glocal Perspective, or maybe International Development and Glocal Policy. That*

would have the merit of being understood immediately by applicants unfamiliar with the use of the term 'glocal' at Hebrew University.

2. *The centrality of development studies as a discipline with a history and theoretical literature must be sharpened in the mission statement and vision of the program (and in all its activities). At present that literature is evoked in a haphazard manner.*
3. *The emphasis on development studies/international development should be systematically conveyed through faculty appointments, changes in the curriculum and research projects.*

C. Program of Study

The course of instruction in Glocal is divided into two discrete and unequal segments. One full year of academic courses (buttressed by a lecture series and, increasingly, by site visits) takes place in Jerusalem, supplemented by a two-month final seminar. The internship component (usually abroad) takes place in the field.

The academic courses of the program, in turn, are divided between theoretical and practice-oriented courses. In the former, it is possible to note such courses as: Introduction to Development; Development Economics, Population Dynamics and Social Change, Gender, Globalization and Development, Environment and Development, and The International Dimension of Development. The more applied classes include courses such as: Program Evaluation, Mapping the World of Development, Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation, Development and Global Health and Social Aspects of Spatial Planning. There are only a few courses offered in research methods (Statistics and Qualitative Research Methods).

The curriculum as it stands at this time lacks theoretical depth and is weak on research methods. For example, there is not a core course on theories of development, on civil society in the non-western world, or on the politics of development.

In stark contrast, the formulation and implementation of the internship program has been designed and elaborated with care. Substantial thought has been put into preparing students for their practicum and partnerships have been expanded. All students we met noted that this was the highlight of their experience. Clearly the program should build on this record and on the solid foundation that has been constructed.

The Committee is convinced that the elements of a stimulating course of study exist, but that the lack of coherence in the curriculum could be corrected by adopting the following recommendations:

1. *Introduction of one to two core courses during the first year on theories of international development. These courses should rely on textbooks and other courses should address the materials provided in these core offerings.*

2. *At least two courses should prepare students for research in the field. The proposed course on research methods should become obligatory.*
3. *The curriculum could be further enriched by considering the introduction of distance-learning courses developed in the United Kingdom (and elsewhere) – for example those of the Open University and the University of London External Program.*
4. *The preference for student papers rather than examinations in theoretical courses should be reversed: examinations in these classes assure a strong common background in the field of development.*
5. *The program lacks a broader Academic Committee that can guide the development of the curriculum and oversee its implementation.*
6. *Existing connections with other programs such as the School of Public Health and the Faculty of Law should be institutionalized and broadened to include area studies programs at the Hebrew University (East-Asian Studies, Latin American Studies and Middle Eastern Studies) and allied research institutions, such as the Harry S Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace.*
7. *The research side of the program should be bolstered. In the short-term, this entails not only the introduction of rigorous courses in research methods, but also the launching of a research arm which would conduct an ongoing faculty seminar, attracting post-doctoral fellows and encouraging joint and individual faculty research projects.*
8. *The possibility of opening a research track which would allow students to write Master's theses (and eventually Ph.D. dissertations) within the framework of the Glocal program is recommended only after the curriculum is enhanced and additional faculty recruited.*

D. Students

The student body of Glocal has, since its inception, doubled in size and become more diversified. Today 8 students (33%) are supported by scholarships, donated by foundations and individuals, as well as by a multicultural scholarship granted by the office of the Rector of the University.

Applicants for admission are carefully screened for academic achievement, maturity and experience in the field. They are asked to prepare a written assignment and those successful are invited to an interview. Ninety-five percent of those offered a place in the program respond positively.

Nevertheless, the level of the students in the program is uneven. Some lack the tools necessary to perform successfully in a rigorous academic environment; others do not have the required language skills. Supplementary support has helped to close some, but not all, of these gaps. One to two students drop out of Glocal during their first year.

A majority of Glocal graduates do work in the field of development writ large: some in development organizations in Israel and abroad, others in allied civil society organizations. Most graduates maintain contact with the program; some are actively involved in tutoring students. Several alumnae have expressed an interest in pursuing further graduate studies toward the Ph.D. degree, but have been hampered by the absence of a research track in the program.

The Evaluation Committee met with two groups of students and alumnae (and Professor Allen lectured to participants in the program). The Committee was impressed by the high level of the group and by their knowledge and enthusiasm.

The program is now in a position to upgrade its candidate pool and possibly increase the size of its student body, to deal effectively with the uneven academic background of its students and to further develop its ongoing connections with its graduates. In order to do so, it should consider the following steps:

1. *Construction of a broader recruitment program to further upgrade its candidate pool and to potentially expand the student body by developing numerical targets for the next decade (despite the program's desire to maintain its present size and familial atmosphere, the current infrastructure can absorb a larger number of students and affiliates). This can be advanced through the development of a marketing program not only on digital platforms (Facebook, the Glocal website) and through the University marketing system, but also more systematically in international networks focusing on development.*
2. *Treatment of the insufficient academic background of some of the students through more rigorous tutoring and the expansion of the "Buddies" program to cover academic matters as well.*
3. *Creation of a much more systematic alumnae network, including opportunities for a return to the University for brief training courses. The publication of a periodic Newsletter can assist in this process.*
4. *Closer tracking of alumnae achievements and continuous cultivation of additional partnership with development organizations.*
5. *Introducing a scholarship scheme, ideally supported by donors, to attract high quality candidates from Africa and elsewhere.*

E. Faculty

The Glocal program does not have any tenure-track faculty positions. It depends for instruction on faculty members with an interest in development primarily from the Faculty of Social Sciences, but also from the faculties of the Humanities, Law and Public Health—often on a revolving door basis given shifting individual research priorities and departmental needs. The Head of the program is appointed by the

Rector upon the recommendation of the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and reports directly to her.

Instructors are drawn primarily for the regular faculty of the University. If they offer courses designed exclusively for Glocal students, their time is bought by the program from their departments. If they offer courses that are also open to other students in their departments, then effectively Glocal benefits from these arrangements. Other instruction needs (including supervision of internships) are met by adjunct faculty recruited specifically for these purposes. During the current academic year, the program has benefited substantially from the participation of a visiting professor on sabbatical at the Hebrew University.

The Glocal program has performed remarkably under these unpredictable conditions, largely due to the commitment of a core group of dedicated Hebrew University Faculty members and the continuous dedication of adjunct faculty who have been with the program since its inception. The Evaluation Committee, however, considers the lack of any permanent faculty as the Achilles heel of the program and the key impediment to its development.

Glocal cannot sustain itself over time while relying solely on the goodwill of senior faculty members in existing departments; nor can it solidify its academic foundation in development studies without providing at least for some appointments of scholars with expertise in the field. The absence of such a core faculty does not allow for the construction of a stable curriculum over time and impedes the elaboration of a research agenda. It also reinforces the second-class status of the program within the Faculty of Social Sciences, making it dependent on the dean for ongoing academic support and funds.

The Evaluation Committee therefore urges several important steps designed to institutionalize the Glocal program and make it a more integral part of the academic community at the Hebrew University.

- 1. Recruitment of several tenure-track faculty members with a specialization in various aspects of development studies/international development. These appointments **must** be joint appointments with existing disciplinary departments, such as sociology, political science, international relations, economics, law, or geography. This process can be achieved either through direct recruitment of new faculty members or, given existing budgetary constraints, by "buying out" part of the positions of existing slots. The opening of even one tenure-track line at the first stage would tie two faculty members to the Glocal program and integrate it more directly into the disciplinary departments of the University.*
- 2. The Head of the Glocal program will be appointed from among the tenure-track members of the faculty, thus augmenting its academic standing.*

- 3. The creation of an annual post-doctoral fellowship for scholars in one of the sub-specializations of development studies would provide a further boost to the faculty and prop up the work of the adjunct faculty who have proved to be the mainstay of the program since its inception.*

F. Administration and Budget

The Glocal program is administered by a skeletal staff. The coordinator of the program, who reports to the Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, is responsible for all aspects of the operation of the program. The coordinator oversees the budget and also supervises admission processes, communication with lecturers, contacts with other departments and student needs. His full-time position, the only one in the program, is temporary. The only additional assistance is provided by a part-time teaching assistant who gives academic support to and helps with some administrative chores.

The program does not have permanent offices. It has been roaming from one place to another, depending on the largesse of existing units. It is currently housed in minimal facilities in the Faculty of the Social Sciences, after moving from the offices it received from the School of Public Administration located in the Faculty of Humanities.

The budget of the program depends on donations (about 65%) and direct support from the University via the Faculty of Social Sciences (35%). In 2014-2015 the annual subvention from the University was NIS 540,000 and donations reached NIS 1,252,261. Each of these sources has fluctuated annually depending on fundraising capabilities—conducted through the public relations section of the University—and allocations received by the University from the Planning and Budget Committee of the Council on Higher Education. The budget covers salaries, scholarships and running expenses.

The Glocal program is an expensive one, although it does generate income to the University through full-time tuition and donations. Its existence also assists the University in its general fundraising activities.

The Evaluation Committee is concerned about the lack of a stable infrastructure, secure means and rudimentary facilities for the program. It therefore recommends:

- 1. Creating a sufficient and stable budget line for the next five years to enable the smooth operation of the program.*
- 2. Securing the office of the coordinator of the program by transforming it into a permanent position.*
- 3. Providing permanent facilities, including an office and a dedicated classroom) to the Glocal program.*

G. Conclusions and Summary of Main Recommendations

In its first five years the Glocal program has established an important niche for itself as a flagship cross-disciplinary program dedicated to providing tools for putting development into action. It has gained a reputation as an innovative venture on campus and has begun to acquire a reputation in the Israeli and international development community. Its faculty, students and alumnae continue to be enthusiastic about its accomplishments and future potential.

Now that its establishment phase has been successfully completed, the program requires stabilization and institutionalization. The Evaluation Committee firmly believes that the Glocal Program for Development Studies should be maintained and become a permanent part of the graduate offerings of the Hebrew University, located in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The recommendations of the Evaluation Committee, elaborated in this report, focus on several interrelated suggestions.

1. The institutionalization of the program as an independent, cross-disciplinary framework within the Faculty of the Social Sciences.
2. The substantive grounding of the program in the field of development studies through the strengthening of core course in theories of development, the recruitment of faculty specializing in the field, and the elaboration of research aspects of the program.
3. The creation of a core group of tenure-track faculty members with joint appointments in the Glocal program and disciplinary departments.
4. The upgrading of recruitment procedures and the gradual expansion of the student body.
5. The provision of adequate facilities, administrative capacities and a stable budget for the forthcoming years.

The Evaluation Committee would like to express its heartfelt thanks to all those who assisted in facilitating this review. Professor Barak Medina accompanied the visitation, assembled written materials and has been helpful throughout. Special thanks to those who gave of their time to meet with the Committee and share their insights: Rector Asher Cohen, Dean Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, Professor Avner De-Shalit, Professor Guy Harpaz, Dr. Amelia Rosenberg Weinreb, Dr. Reut Barak Weekes, Aya Navon, Ido Benbenisti and the students and alumnae of the program.