



17 Adar 5778
March 4, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

1. As already reported, we have reached an agreement with the government that ensures our financial stability and provides an opportunity for growth. No layoffs are required. In fact, the Plan will enable us to increase the number of our academic faculty members, from 950 today to 1,070 within seven years; and it requires us to keep the number of our administrative staff at its current level of 1,764 positions.
2. Prizes: The Israel prize, the highest honor in Israel, will be awarded this year to 6 academic scholars, among them 4 are faculty members of the Hebrew University: Sergio Hart (Economics), Alex Lubotzky (Mathematics and Computer Science) Edwin Seroussi (Musicology), and Izchak M. Schlesinger (Psychology). The two other laureates are Shlomo Havlin (Physics, Bar-Ilan U.) and Elisha Qimron (Jewish Studies, Ben-Gurion U.). This incredible achievement is a manifestation of our leading academic status. An additional laureate, author David Grossman, is a graduate of our University (Philosophy and Theater Studies) and received an honorary Doctorate from the Hebrew University last year.

The Yoram Ben-Porat President's Prize to a Young Excellent Scholar will be awarded to Prof. Nir Bar-Gill, from the Applied Physics Department at the School of Engineering and Computer Science and the Physics Institute at the Faculty of Science on Wednesday, March 7th, at the Edmond J. Safra campus. A week later, on Tuesday, March 13th, at the Mt. Scopus Campus, the Rector Prizes will be awarded. The Prizes are awarded to 66 excellent students, as well as to six faculty members for Excellence in Research, Teaching, and Contribution to Society: Prof. Roi Baer (Chemistry), Prof. Mona Khoury Kassabri (Social Work), Prof. Rina Talgam (Art History), Prof. Oded Navon (Earth Sciences), Prof. Ora Paltiel (Public Health), and Prof. Ronnie Friedman (Agriculture). In addition, five faculty members are awarded the Milken Award for Excellence in Teaching: Dr. Gadi Heimann (International Relations), Prof. Tammar Zilber (Business Administration), Prof. Emeritus Eitan Yefenof (Medical School), Prof. Sara Cohen (School of Engineering and Computer Science), and Prof. Assaf Friedler (Chemistry). The faculty are invited to these ceremonies, to express appreciation to our excellent colleagues.

3. Visibility of our academic research. We continue to work on increasing the visibility of our research in popular media. Each faculty will appoint a faculty member, as well as students, to facilitate the process of disseminating information to the media, with the help of our Department of Marketing and Communication. A convenient tool is [Altmetric.com](https://altmetric.com/products/free-tools/bookmarklet/) (go to altmetric.com/products/free-tools/bookmarklet/, and there grab the blue square "Altmetric it" to your bookmark bar. Whenever you open an article in full text on your browser, click on Altmetric It to receive information about all popular media citations of the article). Please contact Hagai Eisenberg from the Physics Institute for further information about ways to enhance our research visibility.



4. Teaching: Last week we held a meeting of all those involved in the administration of teaching at the university (including Heads of Departments). We discussed ways to implement the feedback we received in the annual survey of the students' opinions regarding their study at the Hebrew University. Following this meeting, each academic unit will discuss thoroughly the results of the teaching surveys, and set a work-plan that will be submitted to the Dean and the Rector, and will be published. The plan should map the main challenges the Department faces in terms of teaching, and the processes it aims to employ to determine the activities necessary to improve our teaching.
5. Assigning academic credit for extra-curricular activities: The Senate's Standing Committee decided to award 2 credits for extra-curricular activities to undergraduate students. The credit will be awarded for activities that benefit society, include Miluim (reserve service in the IDF), community activity, and other volunteer work that the students report.

Yours,

Barak Medina