

Extra-Academic Studies

The School of Technology

Course development and operation

This year we completed the development of study materials for several courses in the study program for electrical technical engineers for individuals holding a certified electrician's license, in keeping with the two-year development plan for 2007-2008. In addition, we updated the course "Introduction to Programming with C# for a Microsoft.Net Environment" for the Software Technical Engineering track, and work continues on translating the 5th edition of *Microelectronic Circuits*, by Sedra and Smith, to replace outdated learning materials in two key courses in the Electronic Technical Engineering track.

Study program at the Israel Electricity Company

The School of Technology won the Israel Electricity Company tender for a 30-month training program for training the Company's electrical technicians as electrical engineering technicians. The program includes 11 courses and a final project. The first group of 36 individuals began the program in November 2006 and will complete its studies in the beginning of 2009. A second group of 40 employees from the central region began its studies in June 2008.

Enrollment Data

Program	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Technician/Practical Engineer program (including the integrated program)	974	951	1,013
Electrical Technician/Practical Engineer – new program	65	228	335
Continuing education for teachers and vocational courses	254	235	214
Total	1,293	1,414	1,562

Graduates

Area	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Technician / Practical engineer	35	41	42*
Students from other colleges who completed their studies at the School of Technology	20	21	22
Certified electrician	25	16	-
Technology teachers	137	170	149
Vocational training programs	0	13	65
Total	217	261	278

* Of the 42 graduates, 39 were awarded practical engineering degrees.

The In-Service Teacher Training Unit

Through its activities, the In-Service Teacher Training Unit realizes one of main goals of the Open University – to enable the teaching community in Israel to enhance its educational and professional level, as stated in the University's founding document (the Schramm Committee Report). This year as well, the Unit's activities focused on two areas in line with this goal: conducting unique projects for the Ministry of Education and offering continuing education programs, courses and symposia to employees in the educational system. The OUI differs from other universities in its ability to offer continuing education activities throughout the country and to meet the needs of the education field, both in central Israel and in the periphery, using advanced technological tools.

Unique Projects

Curriculum evaluation research: After winning the Ministry of Education tender, the Unit, in collaboration with academic faculty from the OUI and other universities, conducted five comparative studies that reviewed the literature on the following topics: programs of study worldwide; mathematics and civics curricula; teaching according to worldwide standards; higher-order thinking skills. The studies aimed to meet the needs of the Curriculum Center of the Ministry of Education. All studies were well received.

“The Pedagogic Horizon” – Training teachers to cultivate thinking in pupils: The Ministry of Education Pedagogic Secretariat underscores the importance of advancing education toward in-depth comprehension in various knowledge fields. The Teacher Training Unit is a partner to this process through the development of training programs for teachers in various disciplines and their integration into teaching certificate studies. The Unit also conducts evaluation studies to examine the process in English and Hebrew instruction in high schools throughout the country.

Program for training diagnostic specialists and assessors in learning functions: The Unit, along with the OUI Education and Psychology Department, takes part in one of the leading Ministry of Education programs for training didactic diagnostic specialists. The Unit is authorized by the Ministry of Education to offer a program qualifying school diagnosticians. This 3-year, 800-hour certification program includes OUI courses in relevant content areas, acquaintance with diagnostic tools and fieldwork in leading diagnostic centers. Two groups are currently in the program: one completed its second year of studies and the other completed its first year. There are also two groups training to be diagnosticians in the Arab sector: one in Be’er Sheva (focusing on the Bedouin sector) and the second in Givat Haviva. In addition to these groups, continuing education activities focus on diagnosis, identification and teaching methods for integration of special needs children.

Online activities: The Teacher Training Unit operates 11 websites in courses for qualifying leading position holders in the education system. The course websites – all of which include updated materials and links related to the study topics – allow for collaborative study based on a unique teaching model developed by the OUI that enables a structured discussion in forums and discussion groups as well as learning in a Wiki environment. Owing to the expertise of Unit personnel, combined with its online teaching, learning and evaluation processes, the Unit was invited to tutor in educational frameworks. These included a course on integration of evaluation processes in computer-based environments for the teaching staff of the “Katom” program (a program of the Davidson Institute of Science Education at the Weizmann Institute that prepares teachers and students for education in the digital era by providing them with laptop computers). In addition, the Unit provided tutoring to the Amal school network on developing computer communication policy.

Continuing Education and Enrichment

As it does every year, the Unit offered continuing education and enrichment programs for teachers, principals and inspectors throughout the country. In 2007-2008, 2,216 individuals attended 77 courses and workshops (totaling 4,151 hours), detailed below.

Content fields	# of courses
Developing leadership and training position-holders	18
Field-specific enrichment: history, sociology, microbiology, film studies, civics, etc.	23
Qualifying diagnostic specialists and counselors for pupils with learning disabilities	10
Means of assessment and evaluating pupil achievements	9
Thinking skills and learning strategies	9
Personal enrichment	8

Establishing the Chais Center – A University Center for Teacher Professional Development

Philanthropist Stanley Chais offered a targeted donation to the OUI with the aim of advancing the achievements of the educational system in Israel. The OUI plans to establish a Center for Teacher Professional Development that will act to improve the professionalism of teaching personnel and contribute to the empowerment of teachers. The coming year is a preparatory year; the Center will begin operations in 2009-2010.

Continuing Studies

The Continuing Studies Center includes seven schools: *Ascolot*, *Hasifa*, *Tafnit*, *Tafnitech*, *Diploma*, *DiAlog* and *Meirav*. The number of courses granting credits toward an academic degree was expanded this year. 17,352 students from the private sector studied in the Continuing Studies Center in 2007-2008. Extensive activity in the periphery expanded, leading to penetration of new target audiences in the ultra-orthodox and Arabic-speaking sectors.

School websites were modified and updated to improve Google search hits. Designed for user-friendliness, the websites contain extensive information about the schools, course descriptions, video clips, catalogs and additional information. Each course description is linked to an online form enabling registration for the course.

Computerization of the seven schools was expanded this year. The invoice system for groups within organizations was expanded and improved, as were the payment system, tutor contracts, and allocation of classrooms for tutorial sessions in conjunction with study facilities. In addition, an option was added for sending emails and SMS messages to prospective and current students.

Ascolot – School of Interdisciplinary Studies

12,446 students studied at *Ascolot* in 2007-2008. The Raanana branch on the University campus held wide-ranging activities with more than 1,000 registered students. In courses in film studies, particularly the course "Opening Night," the scope of activities expanded in the Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Raanana branches and in the periphery (Modi'in, Ganei Tikva and others). This year, *Ascolot* expanded its collaborations with cultural entities including the Cinematheques in Haifa and Tel Aviv and the Philharmonic Orchestra. It also held symposia with leading authors, among them Amos Oz and David Grossman, which contributed to the school's branding as a leader in culture and in knowledge fields in Israel.

***Beit Ayala*:** The *Beit Ayala* branch of *Ascolot* is located in the home of philanthropist Ayala Zaks-Abramov. The building remains as it was originally designed, as a residence, and the classrooms are located in the family's guest and living quarters, thus creating an intimate and leisurely atmosphere. *Beit Ayala* offers about 25 courses given by leading lecturers and scholars, in morning classes and on "Cultural Friday," covering a wide range of fields: music, film, philosophy, science and others.

Hasifa – School of Communications, Television and Multimedia

Hasifa offers varied study tracks, most of which enable students to accumulate academic credits that can count toward a degree at the Open University. Among the special events held by the school this year:

"Comedina": An exhibition by first year students in the visual communications track, expressing their opinions about selected features that characterize the State of Israel in its 60th year, in a variety of knowledge fields. The exhibition, which received broad media exposure on television and in newspapers, was designed as gift shop that offered unique gifts to the State: T-shirts, new national flags and consumer goods modified in terms of their function and the values they convey.

Graduate exhibition: At the traditional end-of-year event, "Digital Happening 2008," dozens of graduates exhibited their works in the areas of design, animation, documentary and feature films, etc.

Tafnit – Continuing Education for Managers

This year *Tafnit* expanded its activities as well as its accessibility. The school developed new content areas and existing courses were updated in light of market trends and professional developments in management. The school continued to offer numerous projects that expose participants to the varied study opportunities at the Open University.

Women's advancement project: The project aims to grant women tools for economic independence, ultimately enabling them to fill senior management positions. The project offers key courses at subsidized prices, among them business entrepreneurship and personal coaching and breakthroughs. Among others, a course was offered this year in collaboration with the Kfar Saba Women's Council, qualifying women directors in public companies.

Workshops for immigrants and for soldiers on their own: *Tafnit* offers courses on preparing for civilian life for new-immigrant soldiers and soldiers on their own, who are at the end of their military service, to help in the transition to civilian life. The workshops, in collaboration with the Jewish Agency, IDF, the Gross Foundation and the Queen Esther Fund, offer vital information about academia and the employment market and motivate soldiers to select the academic track as an important tool for integration into the job market. Seventy-one groups of 20 soldiers each participated in workshops this year.

Tafnitech – School of Computers

Tafnitech views the employee as central to the performance of the organization. *Tafnitech* training enables even individuals with no prior background in computers to enter the world of technology, and provides a simple means to remain up-to-date for those who wish to keep up with new and future technologies.

Diploma – Certificate Studies

Diploma offers study tracks for professional training and for preparing students for licensing examinations in a variety of areas: tourism, finance, graphic design and real estate. Again this year, *Diploma* conducted a wide range of activities for Habad women seeking an alternative to studies and employment in the teaching profession, at the Haredi college, Beit Rivka, in Kfar Habad. In 2007-2008, the OUI opened study groups at the college for medical secretaries and wage accountants, and in computerized graphics, bookkeeping and English.

DiAlog - School of Languages

DiAlog offers a variety of courses to the general public and business organizations. This year, the number of instruction hours in courses in Russian and German grew, along with a significant increase in the number of instruction hours in English.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister's Office project: *DiAlog* won tenders issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister's Office for teaching the spoken language and culture of the destination country to family members of emissaries prior to their departure. The school also prepares their children for the study method applied in the American schools throughout the world.

Project for the advancement of academics of Ethiopian origin: The school offers English language courses to Ethiopian-born Israeli academics with the aim of expanding employment opportunities in line with their professional and academic abilities. The course is subsidized by the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews.

***DiAlog* for the benefit of the community:** The school offers English language courses to high school dropouts in collaboration with the Bnei Brak municipality.

Meirav - School for Training Complementary Medicine Professionals

Meirav, in collaboration with "Maccabi Natural," expanded its activities this year in the Haredi sector. Among others, the school offers certificate studies in complementary medicine to women, in collaboration with Ma'ayanot College in Jerusalem, as well as study programs in collaboration with the Bnei Brak Municipality and the Margalit Women's seminar in Jerusalem. This year the school also offered tracks that included courses granting academic credits.

***Meirav* for the benefit of the community:** Second year students were involved in extensive volunteer activities during the year and treated children from various non-profit organizations, schools and institutions, including *Elem* for at-risk youth, *Akim* (the national association for the advancement of the mentally handicapped in Israel) and *Kfar*



The grounds at Beit Daniel

Ofarim (an institution for autistic children). Students also treated Haredi women, mothers of special needs children (in collaboration with Bnei Brak Municipality) and children with learning disabilities at Kfar Hayarok and at a junior high school in Ramat Hasharon.

Beit Daniel

Activities at Beit Daniel continued to expand in 2007-2008 and served new and returning customers. Many organizations use not only the seminar rooms, but also the lawns and vast open spaces for special and unique workshops.

As in the past, special activities took place at Beit Daniel, including a conference held by *Yad Hanadiv* for recipients of the Michael Bruno Memorial Award; an event of the Rappaport Institute of the Technion honoring Nobel Laureate Prof. Aaron Ciechanover; a Cambridge University researchers' workshop; conferences held by various entities; workshops of *Shatil*, the New Israel Fund's empowerment and training center organization (which provides support and consulting services to social change organizations) on the topic of mixed cities and conflict management; symposia; employee training of leading companies; the Elbit quality management program; Hand in Hand (the Center for Jewish Arab Education in Israel) conference; cooking workshops; a workshop for painting on wood. Companies and organizations that conducted activities at Beit Daniel include Intel, Teva, Tambur, Strauss, Marvell, Bank Leumi, the Reali High School, Tzoran, Bank Hapoalim, Tower, Discount Bank, Amnir, EZchip Technologies, Given Imaging, Pelephone Communications, Clalit Health Services, Press-Sense, Caesar Stone, Unilever, Alliance, Hanita Metal Works, Delta, Paz, T.U.T. Communication and Results, Microsoft, Tel Aviv University, Tnuva, Netvision 013, Israel Railways, the Center for Educational Technology, and more.

The OUI also holds internal events at Beit Daniel. Events conducted this year included a management development workshop, departmental symposia, a workshop for graduate students in the Biological Thought program, as well as an inter-university conference held by the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Communication; a workshop of the Department of History, Philosophy and Judaic Studies; and others.

In the best tradition of Beit Daniel, musical events were also held this year, including courses offered by Mishkanot Sha'ananim and musical weekends in collaboration with a music center in Berlin, a music conference of *Yanshuf* (an amateur chamber music players organization), concerts, and more.