

# International Academic Initiatives

The Open University of Israel maintains extensive international collaborations. Faculty members initiate contact with their peers throughout the world, and the OUI regularly hosts university delegations and guests from other global organizations. The OUI's International Academic Initiatives aims to further extend and enhance these initiatives which serve to connect the OUI to academic endeavors worldwide for the benefit of faculty and students. Prof. Tamar Hermann heads these initiatives, having replaced Dr. Yoram Kalman who held the position until the spring.

The initiatives this year included international partnership in the HOME project to develop a European network of interuniversity collaborations in the field of open education and MOOCs. The OUI also participated in Empower, developed by the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU); in the annual national conference in Paraguay of the National University of Asuncion; the VMCOLAB Project for innovation and internationalization of institutions of higher education; and Tel Aviv Global – a project by the Tel Aviv Municipality which promotes academic connections between Israel and Lithuania. In addition, the OUI took part in the Erasmus conference, which dealt with joint degrees, and the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), in cooperation with UNESCO, which discussed the opportunities and limitations of distance teaching. An academic collaboration agreement was signed with The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies in Kolkata, India. The OUI hosted a delegation from the Jiangsu Open University in order to explore opportunities for joint initiatives in distance learning.

## The MOOCs Project

MOOCs are online courses open to the general public in Israel and abroad. Three of the courses offered this year are listed below.

- **The Modern Middle East** (in Hebrew, Spring semester): Study materials for the 2,040 students participating in this MOOC were updated (as required by the dynamic reality in the Middle East) and video materials were added, as well as in-depth discussions about the use of films in historical research.
- **Psychology in Education** (in Arabic, Spring semester): The course was expanded, and lectures and discussions were added in order to concisely present the content of the Hebrew language OUI course. The MOOC lectures in Arabic are distinct with respect to the percentages of viewers, which is also evident in terms of the geographic segmentation of the number of views. The five leading countries for views of this course are Israel, Morocco, the US, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia.
- **Genocide** (in English and in Hebrew): This MOOC was offered for the first time this year, with 754 students participating in English and 1,810 participating in Hebrew. It received very positive feedback.

## Collaboration with Foreign Publishers

McGraw-Hill, for the translation of *The World of Chemistry*.

### Translated books published in collaboration with outside publishers

Cengage Learning: *Biology, The Unity and Diversity of Life*

- P. Wohl Publishing, Inc.: *Planning, Manufacture, and Operations*
- Cambridge University Press: *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*