

Students

In the 2003-2004 academic year, 36,315 students were enrolled in undergraduate courses. An additional 2,282 students, who had almost completed their degree studies, were registered for seminar papers only. In graduate studies, there were 2,598 students (including 1,097 students taking qualifying courses); 36 graduate students were registered for seminar papers only, 21 for final projects and 8 for theses.

A "student" at the Open University is a person who registered for one or more courses and has not cancelled or postponed the enrollment. The total number of students represents the number of people studying at the Open University. A student taking two or more courses is counted only once.

Special Student Populations

As an institution of higher education based on distance learning, the Open University is unique in the access it provides to academic studies for population groups with special characteristics and needs that are not easily met by other higher learning institutions. These groups include residents of the periphery, minorities, ultra-orthodox Jews, soldiers, and students who are confined to their homes or other places.

This year, the University devoted efforts to assisting Arab students (see section on Teaching) and improving service to overseas students.

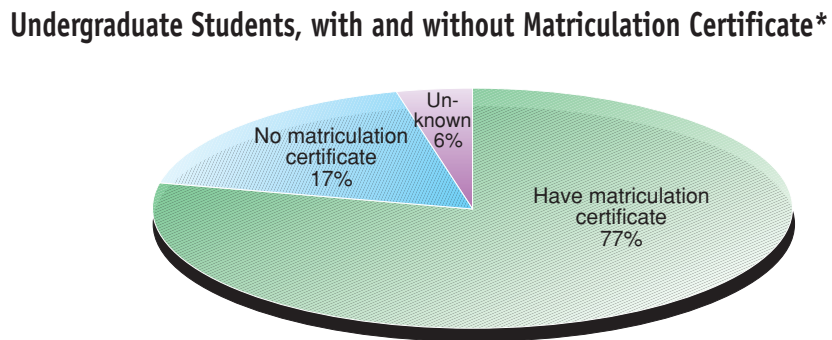
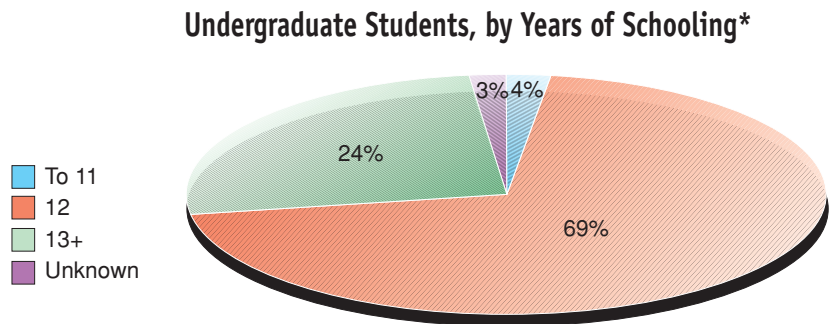
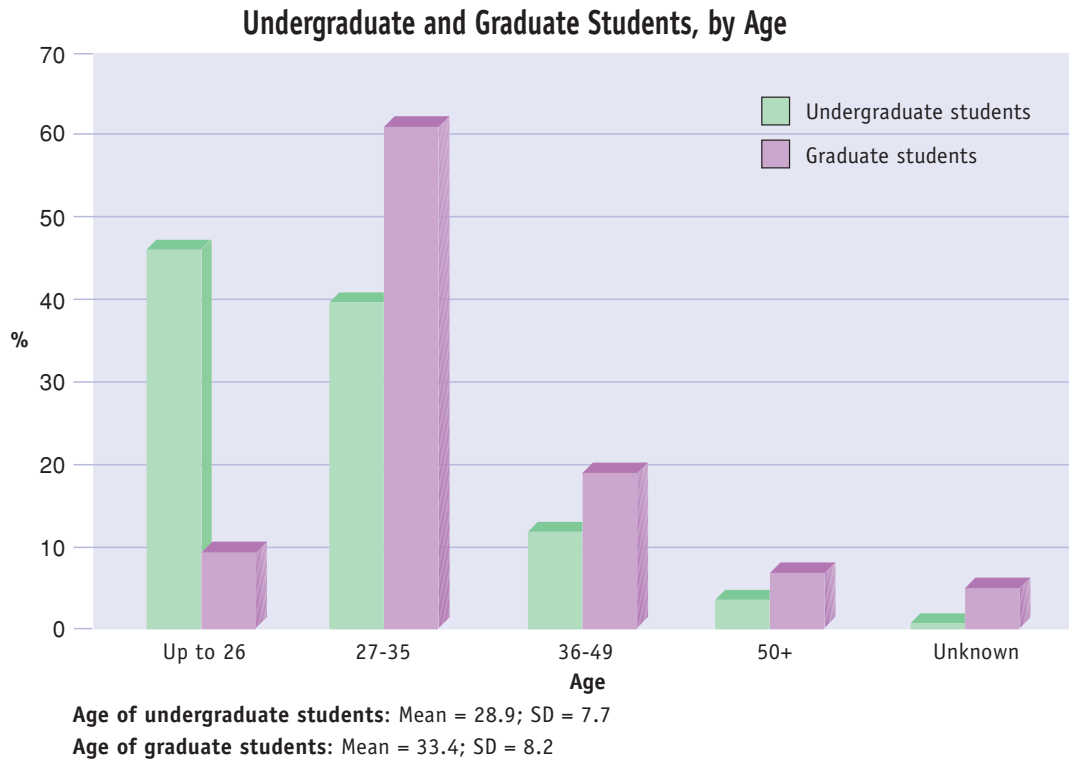
Overseas students

About 400 students in 63 countries studied at the Open University this year. Following recommendations of the Overseas Students Committee in 2001-2002, the following measures were taken:

- The Office of the Dean of Academic Studies took steps, as far as possible, to enact synchronous tutorials in certain courses, through InterWise, for groups of overseas students, enabling them to participate in virtual tutorials despite the geographic distance.
- A new website was launched for Open University students abroad. The site provides all relevant academic and administrative information in an accessible and organized manner in both Hebrew and English to prospective students interested in studying while abroad and to current overseas students.
- Our overseas students can now receive online academic counseling in selecting courses and study tracks, contact various Open University entities, order an information catalog or a course catalog, and update their personal information.
- Contact persons were designated to handle inquiries of overseas students.

Undergraduate and Graduate Students, by Sex





* According to students' self-reports upon enrollment.

Students with Disabilities

Individual tutorials: A number of students with medical disabilities received personal tutoring. For example, one visually-impaired student received individual tutorials in a course in which the heavy reading load requires complex perception and three-dimensional vision.

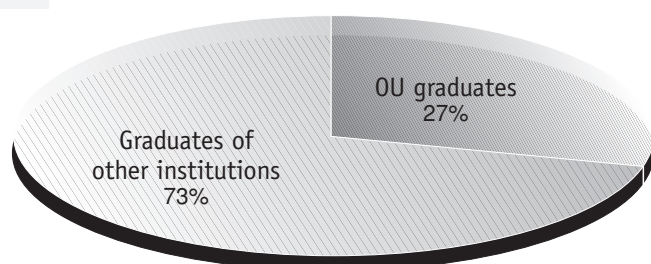
Special test conditions: Special test conditions such as time extensions, having the examination read aloud and dictating answers, special examination dates, breaks during the examination and other adjustments as required, were approved for 236 students with disabilities.

Graduate students, by degree (including those taking qualifying courses)¹

Degree	Students
Computer Science (MSc)	330
Democracy Studies – Interdisciplinary (MA)	424
Biological Thought (MA)	36
Business Administration (MBA)	1,787
Education, 'Learning Technologies' and 'Learning Systems' ² (MA)	25
Total	2,602

- 1 In 2003-2004, 4 students were registered for more than one graduate degree (including qualifying courses)
- 2 In 2003-2004, students took only qualifying courses

Open University Graduate Students, by Institution



Cultural Activities

The Dean of Students acts to compensate for the lack of campus life by initiating cultural events usually organized by the Student Association. For the first time this year, cultural activities unrelated to a specific course were held. In "An Open Discussion: Culture and Current Events" the University hosted Minister of Defense Shaul Mofaz. The event, transmitted through *Ofek*, utilized the University's technological capabilities in distance teaching. In addition, two parties marking the end of the academic year were organized for students, one in Jerusalem for students in the region and the second in Tel Aviv.





Sport at the Open University

Open University athletes won first and second prizes in several fields in individual and group competitions in the Academic Sport Association (ASA) championships, the ASA winter games and the 36th International ASA games. The Open University men's teams in beach volleyball, indoor volleyball, judo and straight ball were dominant in the competitions; the chess team took second place and the men's handball team won third place. For the first time this year, the Open University participated, and won medals, in the individual ASA games in Tai quan do and navigation racing.

Fifty-five students received Dean of Students certificates of excellence for their achievements in representing the Open University in competitions during the year, and 51 scholarships of varying amounts were awarded.

Financial Assistance and Scholarships

Since 2003-2004, scholarships cover the full cost of basic course tuition. This year a total of 1,629 scholarships were awarded, as detailed below:

Financial assistance	1,114
High school students	90.4
Excellence	150
Special assistance	24.4
Local scholarships	24
Master degree in Democracy Studies	89
"First Step"	27.2
ISEF	70.4
Others	39.6

Trends in financial assistance

Since 2001, the number of students applying for scholarships and financial assistance has grown significantly. The number of outstanding students awarded President's List certificates has also increased following changes in the criteria. The number of young students who requested and received scholarships decreased slightly this year despite the considerable funds allocated for this

purpose and the significantly relaxed criteria. Graduate students in the interdisciplinary Democracy Studies program received designated scholarships for teachers based on allocations by donors.

Career guidance and placement for students and graduates:

Weekly meetings are held with potential employers in order to expand the scope of job offers to Open University students. Counseling and guidance services are offered to students with respect to career path and academic field selection; workshops on career choice and job search skills were held, in which 35 students participated. Placement activities were expanded in study centers as well.

Community Service

ISEF, an international education foundation, awarded scholarships to 25 Open University students this year. Each student received NIS 9,500 in matching funds from the Open University, ISEF, and *Perach*. This year ISEF established a separate organizational unit to serve our students who in the past were assigned to units operating in other universities.

The Perach tutorial project: The number of Open University students who tutor pupils has increased over the past four years, from 471 in 2001-2002 to 967 this year. Every *Perach* tutor was awarded a scholarship of NIS 4,562.

"First Step" – mentoring new students: This year the project was implemented in the course **Introduction to Statistics for Students of Social Sciences I** (26 mentors and 27 trainees) and in **Introduction to Microeconomics** (23 mentors and 26 trainees). Each mentor received a scholarship equivalent to one-third of the tuition of a course for each trainee mentored, as well as a certificate of appreciation. The project was also implemented among Arab students (for details, see section on Teaching).