

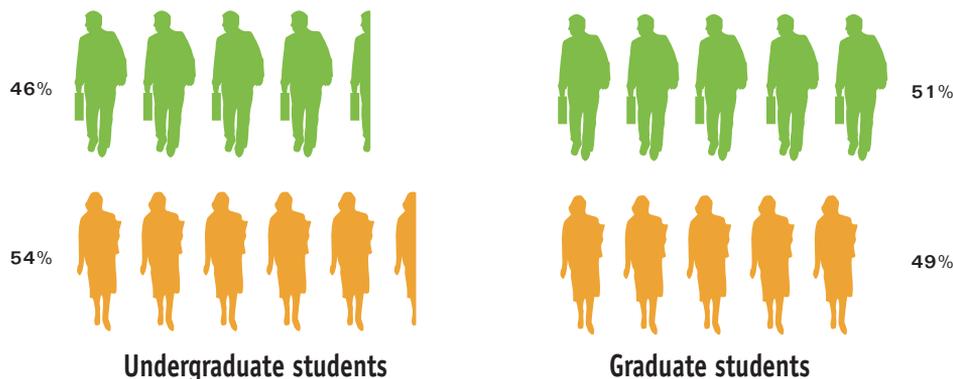
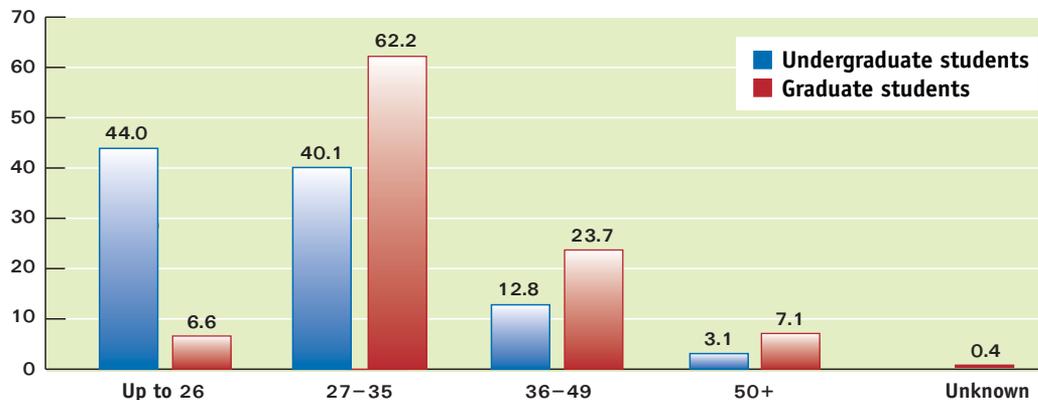
# Students

In the 2005-2006 academic year, 38,340 students were enrolled in undergraduate courses. An additional 2,574 students who were close to completing their degrees were registered for seminar papers only. There were 3,071 students enrolled in graduate studies (including students taking qualifying courses). An additional 57 graduate students were registered for seminar papers only, 23 for final projects and an additional 13 for these. 23% of the graduate students have undergraduate degrees from the Open University.

A “student” at the Open University is a person who registered for one or more courses and has not cancelled or deferred studies. 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.

The study method at the Open University does not require students to take a structured program over a specific period of time. Therefore, in addition to absolute numbers, we are presenting data that enables a comparison with students pursuing a full program towards a degree (FTE – Full Time Equivalent). The calculation is based on the number of course enrollments divided by a factor which expresses the number of annual enrollments that would allow the student to complete a degree in three years. In FTE terms, 16,579 undergraduate and 1,274 graduate students were enrolled at the Open University in 2005/2006.

**Undergraduate and graduate students by age (based on self-reports)**

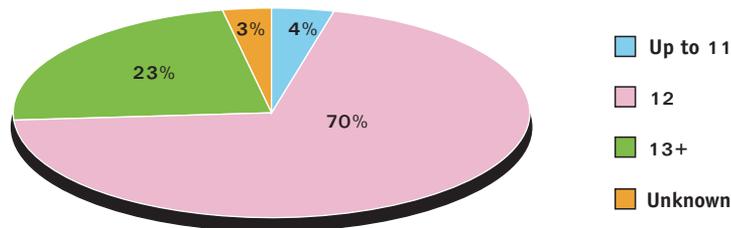


### Graduate students, by degree (including those taking qualifying courses) \*

Degree	Students
Computer Science	280
Democracy Studies – Interdisciplinary	365
Biological Thought	40
Business Administration	2,131
Education, 'Learning Technologies' and 'Learning Systems'	257
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,073 *</b>

\* In 2005-2006, there were 3,071 graduate students, 2 of whom were registered for more than one graduate degree.

### Undergraduate students, by years of schooling (based on self-reports)



### Financial Assistance and Scholarships

This year the number of scholarships awarded grew significantly, and new categories were added. A full scholarship covers basic tuition for one course. This year, 2,645.6 scholarships of varying types were awarded, as specified below:

Financial assistance	1,431.8
Outstanding students	187.0
High school students	233.7
ISEF	70.0
Sports	43.4
Ultra-Orthodox	466.7
Students from Ethiopia	88.0
Excellence ( <i>Perach</i> )	6.0
Academia project	27.0
Local and periphery	69.0
Youth	16.0 *
Teaching survey	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,645.6</b>

\* 8 scholarships were awarded for studies in the Fall 2006 semester

### Scholarships Based on Community Service

The Open University participates in a number of community service projects for which students receive scholarships.

**The *Perach* mentoring project:** 946 Open University students mentored children this year. Each mentor received a *Perach* scholarship of NIS 4,562. Twelve Dean's List

students received certificates and an additional scholarship amounting to half of the tuition for one course. Two OU students received an excellence award from *Perach* for their activities in the project. In the fall, we hosted a national seminar for *Perach* coordinators. The coordinators were given a review on *Perach*, and heard lectures on computer communication.

### *Sachlav* project – Students in schools and kindergartens:

This program operates in schools and kindergartens that implement a long study day system. Undergraduate students plan extra-curricular enrichment activities for small groups of children. In exchange for their activities, students receive a scholarship from the national administration of *Perach*, amounting to tuition for three OU courses. In 2006, there were 47 Open University students in the *Sachlav* Project.

### ISEF – The International Education Foundation:

ISEF awarded scholarships to 25 Open University students this year. Each student received NIS 9,500. Activities were conducted in two projects: in one project, students coached pupils at Beit Danny, the community center in the Hatikva neighborhood. In the second project, *Naarei Peleh* (academic studies for youth), OU students coached 10th-12th grade adolescents from middle and low socio-economic backgrounds, with high motivation and learning abilities. The youth took part in academic studies. Four of them received scholarships from the Dean of Students and took one course each semester.

## Students with Special Needs

The University provides students with physical disabilities study conditions suited to their specific disability. In 2006, there were about 90 students with disabilities were enrolled in OU studies: about one-third blind, one-third deaf and one-third physically handicapped. These students receive study adjustments as well as special examination conditions.

**Virtual Perach:** Virtual *Perach* is a project that enables students with special needs – with motoric disabilities, visually impaired or hearing impaired – to coach children with physical disabilities similar to their own, via e-mail and the Internet. This year, five OU students served as coaches in this project, and themselves received help in their studies from the University's virtual learning infrastructures.

Contact between the coaches and the children was established through the Center for Educational Technology (CET), that initiated the project. The children are pupils in special needs and regular schools throughout the country. The virtual environment enables pupils to expand their social relations and to enhance their writing and technological skills. The coaches, who serve as role models, contribute their personal experience and share their success as individuals who have "been there." They fill the role of "big brother/sister" with whom the children can talk about anything.

Towards the end of the school year, the Open University held a moving, face-to-face meeting of all project participants – the pupils and the coaches.

### **Virtual Perach: "Being able to give is extremely significant for a physically impaired person who is used to needing help"**

Sharon Fadida, 25, is in his third year of studies towards a bachelor's degree in Computer Science at the Open University. He is blind and has motoric disabilities. But he doesn't miss kayaking every week and plans to work as a software programmer in a high-tech company. This year Sharon is coaching six adolescents in the project. He talks about their difficulty in opening up at the beginning because communication between them is based only on correspondence, and describes the change they undergo. About the benefits he reaps from his participation in the project, Sharon says, "It makes me feel that I am helping and contributing from my experience and that is a wonderful feeling. If I helped someone to feel that he could do something, when at the beginning he didn't think he could, that gives me immense satisfaction.



**Center for Assisting Technology:** A Center for Assisting Technology was established this year for students with learning disabilities. The Center offers training to students in using unique technologies that will enable them to compensate for the difficulties they face in the learning process. Among these technologies: reading software in English, reading software in Hebrew, use of word processing software for writing mathematical formulas, etc. Students are invited to the Raanana campus for training in using the software programs so they can take advantage of them in their studies at home. Some programs will be loaned to students.

**Computerization for Allocating Study Centers:** Students with physical disabilities, such as individuals in wheelchairs or the blind, can only participate in tutorial sessions in accessible study centers (for example, in a building that can be entered without climbing stairs or that has an elevator). To solve the logistical problem involved in allocating accessible study centers, a computerization project was undertaken that details the specific needs of these students as well as the study centers and study groups in which they study. For every student, the system provides information about the type of problem due to which there is a need to track the study group in terms of its assignment to a study center and to a specific floor.

### **Students Who Dropped Out Resume Their Studies**

As in previous years, the University made an effort to deal with “drop-outs” – students who proved their ability to deal with academic studies but are currently not enrolled in courses. Following a survey of these students, they were contacted personally by the Dean of Students and by academic advisors who made efforts to find a suitable solution to their needs. Some of these students ultimately resumed their studies at the University. At a special seminar dedicated to problems of perseverance in studies, problems regarding student dropout were discussed, including causes and solutions tried to date. Following the seminar, task groups were established, each focusing on a specific issue: the first course and “mid-way” courses, advanced courses and seminar papers, students with special needs, English studies, and a think tank to examine the problem from a different perspective. The groups include senior faculty members, course coordinators, and personnel from the Evaluation Department and from the Academic Counseling Center. The groups meet on a regular basis, and discussions are also held on the website opened for this purpose. A second seminar is planned to present and discuss the ideas formulated.

### **Student Day**

Towards the end of the second semester, a Student Day was held for the first time at the Open University. About 3,500 students and guests participated in the event that included performances by artists, screening of movies, a pub, food and beverage stands, and activity stands promoting commercial companies.

### **Sport**

Our athletes reached significant achievements in the International Academic Sport Association (ASA) games: our teams took first place in beach and indoor volleyball as well as in squash. The chess team took second place and the men and women's table tennis team took third place. OU athletes also won individual medals in swimming, athletics, judo, taekwondo, mountain bicycling, karate, archery, chess and table tennis.

**Sports excellence scholarships:** 70 students received scholarships of varying amounts for their achievements in representing the Open University in competitions during the year.

## New Immigrants

The Student Authority in the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption funds tuition for new immigrants. In order to be included in this arrangement, students must take an exam to prove a certain level of Hebrew reading comprehension. New immigrant students register through the Office of the Dean of Students and are accorded benefits such as submitting assignments in a foreign language (if possible) and time extension on exams. The University and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption maintain contact with these students throughout their studies and also offer culture and social activities. This year, 233 immigrant students enrolled at the Open University. Two of these students received excellence scholarships in the *Shahak* project (community service), in which new immigrant students commit to community work during their third year of studies. One received the scholarship for exceptional community work with children and adults with mental retardation. The other excellence scholarship was awarded for individual coaching of a child treated by the social welfare department in his city.

## High School Students

In the 2005/2006 academic year, 1,216 high school students (registered in 3,058 courses), and those who began their studies as high school students, studied at the Open University. 85 high school students were awarded excellence certificates for studies in 2005: 30 received President's List certificates (with highest honors) and 55 received Dean's List certificates (with honors). This year, 68 students who began their studies at the OU as high school students completed their studies towards a degree, 35 with honors and 7 with highest honors.

*Student Day: Enjoying the show*



## Improving Student Services

**Sheilta:** This year as well, improvements were added to *Sheilta*, to facilitate student communication with OU administrative systems. These include an option for students abroad to register for an exam from any place and at any time and pay for registration through the system; transmitting the summons to the exam through *Sheilta* enables students who registered for an exam close to the exam date to verify all relevant information and to bring the summons to the exam center; exam and final grades are published immediately upon their input into the system and include the breakdown of grades on each part of the exam, enabling students to know the composition of the grade; a timetable of reinforcement sessions for students with learning disabilities is available.

**Study kits delivered to students by messenger:** A new service (for a fee) was launched this year – delivery of study kits door-to-door by messenger. Students can register for the service through *Sheilta*.

**Improvements to the Call Center system:** *Mashov* was integrated into the Call Center system this year. *Mashov* is a telephone call center that handles technical difficulties and problems encountered by University employees, tutors and students in working on the computer.

**Notification of new books in the library:** A new section, “New on the shelf” was added to the library website. Every month has a separate page that contains the list of new books and details on them, including a link to the “Aleph” catalog.

## Employment Counseling and Placement

The website is updated regularly with job offers, with about 200 new employment opportunities every month. About 1,200 student entries into the website were recorded.

This year the University offered four workshops for employment candidates with the aim of examining the student’s abilities and suitability for various professions.

In collaboration with Bank Leumi, the University held a special employment meeting to enable MBA students and graduates to submit their candidacy for the positions of capital investment consultants and financial consultants.

