

# Academic Development



The Open University's textbooks are the core of its endeavors, and constitute the fundamental study material used by its students. Over the years, the OUI has thus become well known for these textbooks, which are widely used by students and lecturers at other academic institutes in Israel and by the knowledge-seeking general public. The OUI textbook in its classic form presents the study material in a didactic yet friendly manner, prompting a dialog with the student with the aid of discussions in the text, interim summaries of the content, assorted questions and answers, illustrations and other pedagogic aids. The textbooks prove themselves repeatedly as highly efficient alternatives to frontal lectures and lessons, lending renewed significance to the long held view by OUI students and teachers alike that "the book is the teacher".

In addition to the OUI's courses, other forms of courses have been developed over the years, as well as basic models for developing courses. Each model is based either on printed material (such as books especially written for the OUI, generally available books, anthologies) or on technological study methods (such as CDs, videotaped lectures, links to internet sites) or on a combination of different types of study material.

This year, as in recent years, the University has given high priority to updating and revising outdated courses. The OUI is vigorously engaged in this important task while continuing to develop new courses for both graduate and undergraduate studies, which are required for the new programs approved by the Council for Higher Education.

Moreover, the OUI continues uploading courseware and other study aids to the internet with a view of making them more accessible to students while at the same time reducing CD production and distribution costs.

## Courses Approved for Development this Year

### Department of History, Philosophy and Judaic Studies

The Jews of Russia and the Challenges of Modernity  
The Crusades: History and Historiography  
Democracy under Trial: Class, Gender and Citizenship in  
Interwar Germany and France  
Metaphysics and Epistemology

### Department of Literature, Language and the Arts

European and Byzantine Medieval Art  
Israeli Cinema at the Turn of the Millennium  
An Introduction to Israeli Cinema (rewrite)  
A History of Modern Hebrew Literature  
The Comedy

### Department of Management and Economics

Work Measurement and Methods Improvement  
Property Law for Management and Economics Students  
Intermediate Macroeconomics A (rewrite)  
Intermediate Macroeconomics B (rewrite)  
Game Theory with Business Applications (MA)

### Department of Sociology, Political Science and Communication

Introduction to Anthropology (rewrite)  
Democracies and Dictatorships – Ideas, Political Systems  
and Comparative Politics  
Media Discourse  
Workshop: Public Relations  
Introduction to Mass Communication (rewrite)  
Workshop: Public Policy, the Military and Security  
Workshop: Spatial Policy, Territory and Planning  
Workshop: Issues in Public Administration in Israel  
The Political Environment of Policy-Making in Israel (MA)  
Workshop: Writing a Policy Paper (MA)  
Citizenship: A Comparative Perspective (MA)  
The Welfare State: Citizenship, Rights and Resource  
Distribution (MA)  
Democracy and Mass Communication (MA)  
Body and Culture (MA)

### Department of Education and Psychology

Emotional Intelligence  
Brain and Cognition  
Social Psychology (rewrite)  
Philosophy of Education  
Technologies for Serving People with Special Needs (MA)

### Department of Mathematics and Computer Science – Mathematics Division

Infinitesimal Calculus I (rewrite)  
Infinitesimal Calculus II (rewrite)

### Department of Mathematics and Computer Science – Computer Science Division

Programming Languages  
Research Seminar: Topics in Computer Vision and Machine  
Learning (MA)  
Advanced Topics in Communication Connectivity and  
Network Coding:  
Research Topics in Aspect Oriented Software Engineering  
(MA)  
Security in Software Systems (MA) (rewrite)  
Computer-Aided Verification of Hardware and Software  
(MA) (rewrite)

### Department of Natural Sciences

Biodiversity and Conservation Biology  
Stem Cells: From Basic Research to Medical  
Implementations  
Integrative Project in Field Studies  
Faunistics of Vertebrates in Israel (rewrite)  
Mammalian Reproduction (rewrite)  
Introduction to Computational Chemistry  
Organic Chemistry for Biology Students (rewrite)

## Translating Courses into Arabic

During the academic year, 2007-2008, the Open University began to translate its courses into Arabic. It was decided that the first stage would include translation of three courses: "The Middle East between the World Wars", "Educational Psychology" and "Introduction to the Social Sciences". Leading Arab academics throughout Israel participated in the scientific editing of these translations. The translations were completed this year and the material is currently undergoing scientific and language editing before the provisional edition is issued.

## Translation and Development of Courses in Russian

The last books of two courses in the Judaism and Israel Studies Program were published: "Jews in an Era of Transition" and "National Security and Democracy in Israel".

## Development of English Comprehension Courses

In order to meet the demand for English studies through virtual synchronized tutoring, Levels C and D were offered this year to OUI students, and level A courses were available to students studying sciences and humanities. This is in addition to the existing courses, level E (the lowest level) and an English Bridging the Gap workshop.

## Development of Videotaped Courses

This year Ofek Studios produced three videotaped courses ("Genetics for Students of Social Sciences and Humanities", "History of Western Music II" and "Data Mining"), study material for mathematic courses, a series of interviews with Darfur refugees who are in Israel, as part of the "Human Rights in International Relations" course, as well as a series of video clips to teach Arabic writing in the new course "Fundamentals of Literary Arabic".

## Development of Educational Software

With the aid of research grants, a resource for learning English was developed, allowing personal adaptation for each user. This is an internet environment dedicated to helping the student in coping with reading academic texts in English, and also includes tools which enable the lecturer to assess the level of difficulty of the academic English text, and to create aid sheets to help the student with the text. In the psychology lab, a simulation of a maze was developed for the purpose of testing virtual reality. New chapters for the courseware "Financial Theory: Financial Management of Business Firms" were also developed this year.

## New titles produced by the Open University

	<b>Titles</b>	<b>Pages</b>
Textbooks, final edition	41	8,962
Textbooks, provisional edition	63	10,129
Readers and study guides, final edition	91	23,314
Readers and study guides, provisional edition	102	14,408