

Academic Development



Developing study materials adapted to distance teaching is the apex of the OUI academic endeavor. The development process is lengthy, complex and demanding. OUI personnel – faculty members and editors with knowledge and experience in preparing material for independent study, together with academics from other universities, who are experts in the field – are involved in this endeavor.

The OUI's classic textbooks are the essence of OUI activity, written especially for our students and including didactic aids. In addition to the traditional format, in recent years several other OUI course formats have been introduced, each of which has a specific way of combining the study units with didactic aids (such as questions, summaries and presentations). Most of the courses are based on printed material, but every year the amount of electronic material increases, whether filmed or computer-based. Publishing professionals are involved in the production of all printed materials, and experts in learning technologies are involved in the production of electronic materials. For a spotlight on academic development, see pp. 46-48.

As in previous years, this year we have invested every effort into updating existing courses and replacing some, while at the same time developing new undergraduate and graduate courses, especially those needed for study programs newly approved by the Council for Higher Education.

Courses approved for development this year

Dept. of History, Philosophy and Judaic Studies

- Religious Knowledge, Authority and Charisma in Islam
- Gender and Sexuality in Rabbinic Culture
- Chapters in the History of Science
- Youth, Education and Politics in the Middle East (revision)

Dept. of Management and Economics

- Quality Control

Dept. of Literature, Language and the Arts

- Ear Training
- Digital Music Notation and Creation
- Trends in Modern and Contemporary Art: From the 20th to the 21st Centuries
- Creative Writing Workshop: Prose Fiction I
- Creative Writing Workshop: Prose Fiction II
- Creative Writing Workshop: Poetry I
- Creative Writing Workshop: Poetry II



Dept. of Sociology, Political Science and Communication

Introduction to Quantitative Research I: Principles and Design

Introduction to Quantitative Research II: Statistical Analysis

Introduction to Sociology (10134) (revision)

Public Policy in an Era of Globalization

Qualitative Research Methods (MA)

Selected Topics in Public Policy (MA)

Dept. of Education and Psychology

Benefits from Using Assessment Data in Education (MA)

Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science – Mathematics Division

Discrete Mathematics: Set Theory, Combinatorics and Graph Theory (revision)

Computer Science Division

Object Oriented Programming

Seminar: Software Testing (MSc)

Dept. of Natural Sciences

Biodiversity and Conservation Biology

Topics in Computational Chemistry

Instrumental Chemical Analysis

Laboratory: Cell Biology (revision)

Translation of Texts into Arabic

This year, we continued the translation of the first three courses into Arabic: “The Middle East Between the World Wars,” “Introduction to the Social Sciences,” and “Educational Psychology.” A provisional edition of the first two volumes in “The Middle East Between the World Wars,” has been published and we are preparing the final edition for publication. In addition, a provisional edition of “Educational Psychology” has been published. The remaining materials of the three courses are in various stages of editing and production.

Development of English Reading Comprehension Courses

Development of the C-level (the intermediate level) English reading comprehension course was concluded, and production of the new books is close to completion. Revision of the E-level (the lowest level) course was completed and the materials have been adapted to synchronous online delivery. New D-level materials have been published and will be used by students in the fall 2011 semester.

Developing Software for Learning Academic Vocabulary in English

The first stage of developing an interactive program for the acquisition of general academic vocabulary in English has been completed. The program will be available to students from the fall semester. Planning of the second stage is already underway and will include a subject-specific academic glossary.

Establishment of a New Unit at *Shoham*

A new unit for interactive study materials has been set up at *Shoham* – the Center for Technology in Distance Education. It focuses on the development, design and maintenance of interactive study materials and their integration into the University's teaching and learning system. Its primary objectives are the digital book project, the production of video materials, the development and design of interactive modular study resources and their integration into the learning environment and digital books.

Automation of the Academic Development Unit

To administer the course development process and strengthen control and supervision after the development stage, an automated system called *FAN* (a Hebrew acronym for Academic Development Management System), based on advanced technologies, was introduced. Every course under development has its own website containing a diagram of planning and implementation that shows the development and production progress, a list of study materials, the course status, and general information on course administration (including course number, subject matter, and dates of discussions/approvals regarding the course). All these data are automatically entered. The system, which displays a range of different cross-sections, compiles and saves data on handling status, including writing and consultation, copyright, translation, editing, and production. All administrative documents pertaining to the course are also posted.

New titles produced by the Open University

	Titles	Pages
Textbooks, final edition	40	11,285
Textbooks, provisional edition	100	18,985
Readers and study guides, final edition	104	24,313
Readers and study guides, provisional edition	120	13,926