

# Employees



Signing the agreement with the Administrative Workers Committee. Seated, from left to right: *Histadrut* Trade Union Division Chairman, Mr. Avi Nissenkorn; Chairman of the *Histadrut*, Mr. Ofer Eini; President of the Open University, Prof. Hagit Messer-Yaron; OUI Director General, Mr. Amit Streit. Standing, from left to right: Coordinator of the Higher Education Division in the *Histadrut*, Mr. Reuven Pery; Former Head of the Trade Union Division, Ms. Mira Aharonovsky; Representatives of the workers: Mr. Zeev Pearl, Attorney Ran Kidar, Ms. Levana Alfassy, Ms. Yael Aran, Mr. Uri Barda.

Over the past year, the University management was involved in negotiations to sign collective agreements with both administrative and junior academic personnel (course coordinators and tutors).

## Collective Work Agreement with Administrative Employees

After nine months of negotiations, for the first time a collective work agreement was signed last June between the University management, the New *Histadrut* and the Open University Administrative Workers Committee. The agreement formalizes working relations with the administrative personnel, replacing the personal working relations system with a collective one.

The new working relations status required many changes in the University's internal operations. Since the agreement was signed, it has been assimilated into the internal and external computer systems of the Human Resources Administration. This involved sorting administrative employees into various categories entitling them to different working conditions, changes in attendance arrangements and reorganization of payroll.

## Collective Work Agreement with Junior Academic Staff

Negotiations with tutors and course coordinators who organized themselves under the Democratic Workers' Organization (*Koach LeOvdim*), which lasted some two years, were completed. The wording of the agreement formalizes working relations with the University's junior academic staff – tutors and course coordinators. The main points of the agreement include: changing the tutors' status to that of teaching fellows, in line with other universities and after making the necessary adjustments; establishing a reciprocal relationship between University management and representatives of the course coordinators and tutors; defining terms of employment as adapted to the special nature of OUI activity, while still preserving high academic standards and administrative flexibility.

## Organizational Development

Once again this year, there was concentrated activity in the various administrative departments to examine and identify the cause of any problems, and to reinforce and streamline administrative processes. Among others, internal managerial and work teams were created with a view to examining norms and modes of work, division of tasks and areas of responsibility, mutual expectations, etc. Joint learning sessions were held with managers of various departments, aimed at training, reinforcing job perception, providing administrative tools and developing problem-solving mechanisms.

Individual assistance continues to be given to academic and administrative managers who take on new administrative roles. This encourages them to realize their managerial potential; helps them to define and achieve goals, identify challenges and build strategies to confront them; examine behavior patterns that might hold them back; resolve conflicts; and look into departmental structure, roles and modus operandi to improve the department's functioning and make it more efficient.

## Employees Awarded Doctoral Degrees

The Open University encourages its employees to study toward advanced academic degrees, especially members of the academic teaching staff. This year, the following employees were awarded doctoral degrees:

**Ines Gabel:** "A newspaper as a tool in the construction of a community's political and sectarian identity: The case study of *Nekuda*" – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Maya Golan:** "The choreography of organizational help: The dynamics and consequences of co-worker helping interactions over time" – The Technion, Israel Institute of Technology

**Orit Hirt-Ramon:** "'The order of the world': On the image of the model society according to the Maharal" – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Varda Wasserman:** "On the power of the beautiful: Organizational aesthetics as a control tool" – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Tal Silberstein:** "The character of the soldier in Israeli plays and films: the role of the medium in dramatic representation" – Tel Aviv University

**Evan-Gary Cohen:** "The role of similarity in phonology: Evidence from loanword adaptation in Hebrew" – Tel-Aviv University

**Nissim Cohen:** "Public policy, alternative politics and institutions: A conceptual framework and the case of health policy in Israel" – Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

**Hava Noemi Mustigman:** "The history of Zionism until the establishment of the State of Israel: Bibliometric study of research trends, 1948-2005" – Bar-Ilan University

**Dana Kachtan:** "Transparent army, colored soldiers: The construction of ethnic identity in the Israeli army" – Bar-Ilan University

**Dan Steinitz:** "The quantal reflected wave effect: Beyond semiclassical approximation" – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

## The Open University Workforce

This year, a total of 2,231 people were employed at the Open University in 978 positions. Of these 1,364 are women (in 665.5 positions) and 867 men (in 312.5 positions). The University also employed 1,051 tutors (566 women and 485 men).

