

Academic Development



Developing study materials adapted to distance teaching is the apex of the OUI academic endeavor. Academic development functions within the framework of the Office of the Dean of Development and Educational Technology, Prof. Yoav Yair. The development process is lengthy, complex and demanding. This endeavor involves 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.

The Open University's classic textbooks serve as the basis for courses studied at most of Israel's higher education institutions. They are developed especially for OUI students and include various didactic aids, such as questions, summaries, comments and references. In addition to this traditional model, a wide range of course models has been developed in recent years, each unique in the way it presents academic content and pedagogical aids. Most of the courses are based on texts and printed learning materials, but the scope of digital materials grows yearly and includes video courses, digitized anthologies and e-books. Publishing professionals are involved in the production of all print materials, and experts in learning technologies are involved in the production of electronic materials.

This year efforts were made to shorten the duration of course development and streamline the revision process. Special attention was paid to updating and revising existing courses, together with the development of new undergraduate and graduate courses, mostly those required in new programs of study approved by the Council for Higher Education.

Programs of Study Approved by the Council for Higher Education (CHE)

- MA in Educational Administration, Policy and Leadership, in a thesis and non-thesis track
- MA in Social Psychology, in a thesis and non-thesis track
- Updated studies toward high school teaching certificates in the humanities, social sciences and computer science, in accordance with the official CHE guidelines for teacher training



Courses Approved for Development This Year

Dept. of History, Philosophy and Judaic Studies

Introduction to Cognitive Science
 Introduction to Continental Philosophy
 Paradoxes
 Philosophy of Cognitive Science
 Seminar for Outstanding Students in Philosophy

Dept. of Literature, Language and the Arts

Baroque and Rococo: European Art of the 17th and 18th Centuries
 The *Bildungsroman* and Its Variations: Generic, Formal, Political and Psychological Implications
 Creative Writing Workshop: Prose Fiction (revision)
 History of the Cinema I, II (revision)
 Landmarks of Western Literature
 Semantics, Pragmatics and Meaning in Discourse (revision)
 Gender: Culture and Identity (MA)
 Thesis Seminar in Cultural Studies (MA)

Dept. of Education and Psychology

Advanced Statistics and Research Methods I, II (MA)
 Economic Aspects of the Education System (MA)
 Introduction to Educational Measurement (MA)

Dept. of Management and Economics

Business Ethics (revision)
 Electronic Auctions and Markets
 Technology and Innovation Management
 Business Ethics for MBA Students (MBA) (revision)

Dept. of Sociology, Political Science and Communication

The Human Commodity: Slavery and Slave Trade in and from Africa
 Introduction to Local Government (revision)
 Democracy and Democratization (MA) (revision)
 Israeli Democracy: Selected Issues (MA) (revision)
 Popular Culture (MA)
 Science and Culture (MA)

Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science

Computational Models in Cognitive Science
 Approximation Algorithms (MSc) (revision)
 Computational Complexity (MSc)
 Selected Topics in Algorithms (MSc) (revision)

Video Courses

The format of lectures on video *in lieu* of course books provides OUI faculty a relatively quick alternative for course development, while making it easy to update course materials and expand them as necessary. This year, the production of three video courses was completed: “A History of Western Music II” (also including studio performances by the lecturer, Dr. Bella Brover-Lubovsky); “Human Genetics: Medical and Ethical Aspects” (Prof. Gideon Bach); and “History of Mathematics” (Prof. Leo Corry). Filming is underway on another two courses: “Religious Knowledge, Authority and Charisma in Islam” (Prof. Daphna Ephrat); and “Introduction to the History of the Jews in the Medieval Period” (Prof. Israel Yuval, Dr. Miriam Frenkel, Prof. Ora Limor, Dr. Ram Ben Shalom).

Study Program Approval System

A data system was developed to handle the program development approval process, from the proposal stage to approval by the CHE. The system enables collection of all relevant information, transparency of the program’s approval status, streamlining the monitoring process and following up on the approval process; and shortens the time until approval by the Council.

English as a Foreign Language

Course development: The C-level (the intermediate level) English reading comprehension course was published, and new B-level course materials have been written.

Software for learning academic vocabulary in English: The program for learning academic vocabulary in English (“Roads to Academic Reading”) is available to students. Software that enables monitoring usage of the program has been added. Work on the second stage has begun, including a subject-specific academic glossary and the addition of Arabic and Russian.

New Titles Produced by the Open University

	Titles	Pages
Textbooks, final edition	51	16,732
Textbooks, provisional edition	66	13,206
Readers and study guides, final edition	7	1,189
Readers and study guides, provisional edition	89	17,452