

Course Development and Learning Technologies

Developing study materials adapted to distance teaching is at the heart of the OUI academic endeavor. Course development functions within the framework of the Office of the Dean of Development and Educational Technology, Prof. Sarah Guri-Rosenblit. The development process is lengthy, complex and demanding. This endeavor involves OUI faculty members and editors with knowledge and experience in preparing materials for independent study, together with academics from other universities who are experts in their fields.

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 have 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 recorded lectures, 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 computer-based materials.

Courses Approved for Development this Year

Dept. of Literature, Language, and the Arts

Greek and Roman Art: Introduction

Dept. of History, Philosophy, and Judaic Studies

Between Mishna and Midrash: The Birth of Rabbinic Literature

Modern Jewish Messianism

Seminar for Outstanding Students in Philosophy II

Introduction to the Modern History of the Middle East (revision)

Dept. of Sociology, Political Science, and Communication

Democracy and National Security (revision, MA)

Democracy and International Organizations (MA)

Regulation in an Age of Governance (MA)

Public Policy in an Era of Globalization (revision)

Issues in Sociology of the Internet and Online Communication (revision)

Organizational Culture (revision)

Protest as Political Participation (revision, MA)

The Pain of Knowledge: Reflections on Holocaust and Genocide Issues in Education in Israel and Elsewhere (revision, MA)

Dept. of Education and Psychology

Honors Research Seminar: Language and Aging
Education Policy (MA)

Dept. of Mathematics and Computer Science

Seminar in Computational Intelligence

Honors Seminar in Computer Science-Cognitive Sciences

Infinitesimal Calculus III (revision)

Algebraic Structures (revision)

Teaching Computer Science: Methodology (revision)

Dept. of Natural and Life Sciences

Evolution (revision)

Seeds: Dormancy and Germination (revision)

Adaptation of Plants to Environmental Stress (revision)

Development of Learning Technologies

Filmed Courses

Filmed lectures are occasionally offered in place of course books and study guides. The learning content, presented by lecturers in a visual and dynamic manner, creates a sense of proximity for students. This format is an alternative and relatively fast way of developing and/or updating OUI courses. The following courses were completed during the year or are in various stages of development: Introduction to Mass Communication, and Selected Works in Western Literature (flagship courses); Alternatives in Assessment; Introduction to Computer Science Using JAVA; Evolution; Strategic Management; Principles of Business Law; Introduction to Oceanography; Diversity in Education – Theory and Practice; Introduction to Jewish Thought; Introduction to Globalization Studies; Epistemology and Metaphysics; Fundamental Questions on the Knowledge and Nature of Reality; The Golem Legend from Late Antiquity

to the 20th Century; Critical Reading of Scientific Papers and Research Planning; Brain and Cognition; International Management; Israeli Constitutional Law; and Russian Jewry and the Challenges of Modernity.

Digital books

The digital learning materials currently produced by the OUI include textbooks, anthologies, study guides, and filmed lectures. In addition, a need has arisen recently for integrating online learning aids, enrichment websites, film clips, and current events articles. The challenge in combining all of these resources is to create a digital version identical to that which is produced in printed format. The solution lies in the development of a new model of textbooks integrating footnotes using QR (quick response code), a type of two-dimensional barcode which codifies textual information in a graphically visual manner. Students reading a printed book can scan the code using a smartphone application and access the relevant resource on the Internet. Students reading the digital book simply click on the code. This system has already been introduced in the Technology and Innovation Management course and the study guides for Advertising: Theory and Practice, and Management of Information Systems and E-Business.

Digital Guide pilot

The wide use of printed and digital content and media requires students to approach different sources of information in a non-sequential manner. In order to incorporate diverse learning resources on one continuum, digital study guides need to be adjusted weekly. The ROOJOOM pilot was launched this past year in order to create a uniform learning environment that presents all of the sources of information available on all devices and operating systems.

Development of interactive learning resources

In order to answer a need for the development of various online and interactive learning resources, "Storyline," an applications generator, has been applied to two experimental projects. In the first, an online research environment was developed in order to assess the contribution of multimedia to text comprehension. In the second case, students are asked to respond as quickly and precisely as possible to distracting, combined tasks while

presented with different kinds of visual stimuli for relatively short periods of time. The academic development team will eventually be able to update additional experiments independently.

New Titles Produced by the Open University

Type	Title	Pages
Textbooks, final edition	44	13,079
Textbooks, provisional edition	59	14,200
Readers and study guides, final edition	2	487
Readers and study guides, provisional edition	81	21,123
Books converted to digital format	169	
Total	355	48,889