

International Academic Initiatives

The Open University maintains extensive international collaborations with other universities worldwide, and regularly hosts university delegations and guests from other international organizations. The Unit for International Academic Initiatives aims to further extend and enhance these initiatives, which serve to benefit faculty and students, by connecting the OUI to academic endeavors worldwide.

Below are listed the most prominent international projects undertaken during the past year:

- Meetings with representatives of the French Embassy in Israel regarding cooperation between French and Israeli academic institutions, and meetings with faculty members of the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers led to a framework agreement for cooperation between the two universities.

Both parties appointed steering committees to examine the specific disciplines to be affected by the joint agreement. Serving on the OUI steering committee will be Prof. Saleem Zaroubi of the Department of Natural Sciences, Prof. Yoram Kalman of the Department of Management and Economics, and Prof. Daphna Ephrat, Director of the Unit for International Academic Initiatives.

- The OUI is currently investigating the possibility of integrating lectures by Judaic studies researchers into a series of courses on cultural heritage due to be taught in several European countries. Researchers from European universities will take part in the project, which is directed by Università Telematica Internazionale Uninettuno of Rome and offers online courses for all degrees in Italian, French, English, and Arabic.
- As part of Erasmus+ (European Union program for education), the OUI signed initial bilateral contracts with the Technological Educational Institute (TEI) of Western Greece, for cooperation between Dr. Ofer Levi and Dr. Diamanta Benson-Karhi of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science and two colleagues at TEI. Further contracts were signed with the University of the Aegean for a cooperative venture between Prof. Tali Heiman and a colleague at the multi-campus Greek university.
- Dr. Inna Leykin of the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Communication was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship for Senior Specialist Fellows. The scholarship offers the winner the opportunity to invite a senior specialist research fellow from an American

university to visit the OUI. Prof. Michele Rivkin-Fish of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill visited the Open University and met with faculty members from the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Communication. Prof. Rivkin-Fish lectured on her published articles, and delivered a keynote lecture at an international workshop on medical anthropology facilitated by OUI representatives.

- Prof. Nitza Geri of the Department of Management and Economics and Amir Winer and Benny Zaks of Shoham published an article, *Can In-Video Interaction Extend the Attention Span of Learners?* in the April edition of the EADTU journal.
- The Open University hosted the annual national conference of Model UN, at which the opening lecture was delivered by Thomas Genton, Counselor for Press and Cultural Affairs at the US Embassy in Israel. After the conference, Mr. Genton and other Press and Cultural Affairs Unit officials met in order to explore new opportunities for awarding Fulbright Scholarships to Israeli researchers.
- The university sponsored a competition to translate Haim Nachman Bialik's poetry into Dutch. The panel of judges awarded prizes, and the resulting book of poems is currently being prepared for publication: <http://vertaalwedstrijdhebreuws.nl/>

Collaboration with Foreign Publishers

- An agreement was signed with Pearson Educational Ltd. to translate a book for the Introduction to Comparative Politics course.
- An agreement was signed with Palgrave Macmillan (Macmillan Publishers Ltd.) to translate a book for the Political Ideology course.
- The textbook *World Politics* by Cengage Learning Inc. has been translated into Hebrew and published by the OUI.