



**Committee for the Evaluation of Public Health and Health System Management**

**Hebrew University -Hadassah**

**School of Public Health**

**Evaluation Report**

**October 2017**

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## **Chapter 1: Background**

Following the decision of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) to evaluate study programs in the field of Public Health and Health System Management. The Minister of Education, who serves ex officio as Chairperson of the CHE, appointed a Committee consisting of:

- [Prof. Gerald Kominski](#)- Professor of Health Policy and Management and Director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, UCLA, USA; Committee Chair.
- [Prof. Joan R. Bloom](#)- Professor of the Graduate Division, Program in Health Policy and Management, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, USA.
- [Prof. Joseph N.S. Eisenberg](#)- John G. Searle endowed Chair and Professor of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health, University of Michigan, USA.
- [Prof. Jack Zwanziger](#)- Professor of Health Policy and Administration, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA.
- [Prof. Joseph S. Pliskin](#)<sup>1</sup>- Professor Emeritus, Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, and Department of Health Systems Management, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

Ms. Daniella Sandler and Ms. Inbal Haskell-Gordon served as the Coordinators of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.

Within the framework of its activity, the Committee was requested to:

1. Examine the self-evaluation reports, submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in Public Health and Health Management, and to conduct on-site visits at those institutions.
2. Submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the evaluated academic units and study programs, including the Committee's findings and recommendations.
3. Submit to the CHE a general report regarding the examined field of study within the Israeli system of higher education including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study.

The entire process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (of September 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Pliskin did not take part in the evaluation, visit, discussion and writing of the BGU report due to Conflict of Interest.

## **Chapter 2: Committee Procedures**

The Committee held its first meeting on May 7, 2017, during which it discussed fundamental issues concerning higher education in Israel, the quality assessment activity, as well as Electrical and Communication System Engineering Study programs in Israel.

In May 2017, the Committee held its visits of evaluation to seven institutions: Tel-Aviv University, Ariel University, Ben-Gurion University, University of Haifa, Academic College of Emek Yizreel, Bar-Ilan University and Hebrew University. During the visits, the Committee met with various stakeholders at the institutions, including management, faculty, staff, and students.

This report addresses the Hebrew University –Hadassah School of Public Health. The Committee's visit to the University took place on May 17, 2017.

The schedule of the visit is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The Committee thanks the management of Hebrew University -Hadassah and the School of Public Health for their self-evaluation report and for their hospitality towards the committee during its visit at the institution.

## **Chapter 3: Evaluation of the School of Public Health**

### **Hebrew University- Hadassah**

*This Report relates to the situation current at the time of the visit to the institution, and does not take account of any subsequent changes. The Report records the conclusions reached by the Evaluation Committee based on the documentation provided by the institution, information gained through interviews, discussion and observation as well as other information available to the Committee.*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI) - Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine is the pioneer School of Public Health (SPH) in Israel. **It is the only School accredited by APHEA (2015), and has a 55-year-long, internationally recognized tradition of capacity building locally and globally.** Graduate programs include Master's degrees in Public Health (MPH), Health Administration, Clinical Epidemiology, Veterinary Public Health (MVPH), as well as doctoral training. **Israeli alumni hold key positions in the healthcare system and academia.** **The International MPH program (IMPH) trains professionals mainly from lower-income countries, whose post-MPH careers span government, NGOs, academia and clinical practice.** The IMPH alumni program is considered by APHEA to be a "best practice."

**The Committee found a School with strong faculty, research, students, and alumni.** **The close relationship with Hadassah Medical Organization (HMO) has been a major strength for the School for decades,** although declining financial support from the HMO poses some threats to the School's ability to replace upcoming faculty who are retiring. The Committee learned that the School is at a "crossroads," and we were concerned that this meant cuts might be made in some of the School's programs because of the reduced financial support from HMO. As discussed below, the Committee strongly urges HUJI to provide and maintain resources necessary to create a balance between clinical (or exact) sciences and social sciences within the School; choosing one over the other will damage the School's reputation in the Committee's judgment. Our remaining

recommendations to further improve an outstanding School are presented below.

## **2. Mission and Goals**

### Observations and findings

The School's mission is "to strive toward improving the physical, mental and social welfare of the global community, with a commitment towards excellence in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary public health research, training and practice." The overall goal of the School is "to maintain its position as a leading academic institution dedicated to advancing public health knowledge in Israel and worldwide, and inspire personal, professional and political commitment toward 'Tikun Olam.'" The Committee finds the mission statement, goals, objectives, and vision for the School to be clearly stated and appropriate for a School of Public Health, with a strong global focus. We believe the School also plays a significant role in improving the health of Israel's population, which is a core function of a School of Public Health. Therefore, we recommend that the School's mission statement be revised reflect the important contributions of the School to Israeli health.

### Recommendations

**Advisable:** Revise the School's Mission Statement and Goals to reflect the role of the School in improving not just global health, but the health of the Israeli population.

## **3. Organizational Structure**

### Observations and findings

The Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine is located within the Faculty of Medicine of the Hadassah School of Medicine. The School has three academic programs or streams: (1) Epidemiology and Biostatistics, (2) Health Management, Policy, and Economics, and (3) Health Promotion. The School is accredited by the Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA), the only such School with such

accreditation in Israel.

The Committee observed during its site visit that the School is viewed as having a greater emphasis on clinical rather than social sciences by some University leaders. We, however, observed strengths in both the Epidemiology and Biostatistics track, which represents clinical sciences primarily, and the Health Management, Policy, and Economics track, which represents social sciences. In contrast, we learned that Health Promotion and Community Health aspects of the School were in most need of greater investment. Health Promotion was identified as the top priority for faculty recruitment by many people we interviewed, following by Health Economics and Biostatistics, in that order.

The Committee believes that a world-class School of Public Health should be strong in all the core areas of public health and that requires a *balance* between clinical or exact sciences and social sciences, not an emphasis on one to the exclusion of the other. Therefore, we recommend that the University invest in faculty positions needed to create a balance within the School to guarantee strength in all three programs, and in particular, **invest in strengthening the Health Promotion track and Community Health components of the Schools.**

The Committee also recommends that the School simplify the names of the School and its Departments. Specifically, we suggest that the School could simply be named the Braun School of Public Health; Community Medicine is one dimension of public health, and doesn't need to be identified in the School's name. The name of the Department of Health Policy, Administration, and Economics is different from the track (Health Management, Policy, and Economics), and could be simplified, for example, to Health Policy and Management, in keeping with similar departments throughout the U.S. The program in Health Promotion should be located in a Department that reflects Community Health. The Committee does not have a specific recommendation regarding the name for the Department, or what other programs should be combined into this Department, but the absence of a Department focusing on community health seems to us to be an important omission in this School. Finally, Environmental Health is more than simply

environmental epidemiology; it also includes environmental sciences. We recommend that the School consider developing Environmental Health in the curriculum.

### Recommendations

#### **Essential:**

1. University should provide necessary resources to create a balance between clinical (or exact) sciences and social sciences within the School.
2. Simplify the names of the School and the Departments, as discussed above.
3. Elevate Health Promotion and Community Health to Departmental status to reflect its equal status with the other core areas of public health.
4. Develop a plan for adding Environmental Health as a core area of education in the School.

## **4. Study Program and Teaching and Learning Objectives**

### Observations and findings

#### **a. Study Programs**

Hebrew University of Jerusalem was Israel's first School of Public Health and Community Medicine whose academic program was established in 1960 and gained immediate recognition from the WHO having a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. The School is part of the Faculty of Medicine. The School has had a major impact on training and practice in Israel. Its graduates include a majority of senior public health personnel in the country. Over 1000 Israeli students have graduated, specializing in one of three streams: Epidemiology and Biostatistics; Health Management, Policy and Economics; and Health Promotion. It has a complex relationship with Hadassah Hospital through which up to seven FTEs have been provided. However, due to fiscal constraints of the hospital, the FTEs of retired faculty have not been renewed and, currently, only four FTEs are filled.

Today the School offers four Hebrew-language Masters-level degrees: MPH, Master of Science in Clinical Epidemiology (MSc), Master of Health Administration (MHA), and the new Master of Veterinary Public Health (MVPH). In addition, it has an active doctoral degree program (26 candidates currently registered). It also has trained a cadre



of independent public health researchers, including three of their current academic faculty members. **The School is also responsible for teaching public health-related courses in the Medical School, and since 2003, offers a joint MD-MPH program.** Since 1970, it also offers a one year English-language MPH International Program that has awarded the MPH to nearly 850 graduates from over 90 countries. – mostly in developing and transition regions of Africa, Asia, Oceania, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe, as well as developed countries of North America and Western Europe.

### **b. Teaching and Learning Outcomes**

The program subscribes to the Bologna Accords notion of outcome evaluation in both the design of and evaluation of course content. Examples of continuous evaluation are provided in the report. Possibly, due to its low student faculty ratio, the course material is tested not only by multiple-choice questions, but also by essay and short answer questions.

**Excellence in teaching is of importance to the School and efforts are provided to support teaching for new faculty as well as evaluate teaching by student reviews and support/assistance to instructors to improve their teaching.** Faculty with weaker teaching who do not show improvement are let go.

The School has an exemplary process for moving from global outcome objectives to the specific learning objectives in the syllabus for each course in the program. The global outcome objectives are well stated. The learning objectives are appropriately assessed by both qualitative methods (short answer and essay questions) and objective methods (multiple choice). In addition, they demonstrate the importance of quality teaching by use of student evaluations and by providing support and assistance to instructors to improve their teaching.

As discussed above, the Committee found some gaps in the curriculum relative to the core areas of public health. Environmental Health is not well developed. Community Health and Health Promotion could be threatened if new faculty are not recruited to teach in this area. Biostatistics is also under-developed because of lack of full-time faculty slots in this area.

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **Essential:**

1. Secure faculty resources necessary to ensure educational quality in Community Health

and Health Promotion and in Biostatistics.

2. Develop a plan for adding Environmental Health as a core area of education in the School.

**Desirable:** Maintain current student faculty ratios is desirable to enable the program to continue as it has been.

## **5. Human Resources / Faculty**

### Observations and findings

The School has 16 full time faculty members (according to the projection table distributed at the visit). Nine of the slots are from HUJI, 5 from Hadassah and 2 from Clalit Health Services. The latter two have been stable over the years. All senior faculty are full time. Table 5 in the Self-Assessment report lists 13 Full time faculty members. Table 5 also includes one retiree (Prof. Brezis). The table provided at the meeting lists one retiree from HUJI slots and one from Hadassah. It is unclear to the committee where this one retiree is counted. We were told that Hadassah funds four slots so perhaps the one retiree is counted among the five in the table presented to us.

For many years, the slots of HUJI and Hadassah have been approximately equally split, but recent years saw a shift to more slots from HUJI, as indicated above. The reason for this shift is the fact that Hadassah cut the slots of three retired faculty members. The BSPH pleaded with the university and were awarded these slots.

The committee understood that there is an urgent need to recruit three new faculty members in the areas (in descending priority) of health promotion, health economics and biostatistics in light of upcoming retirements. The School currently does not have a single senior faculty member in the area of health promotion. In the other two areas, they have one faculty member each, expected to retire in coming years.

The faculty offices are spread over two adjoining buildings but far from each other. One is the hospital and the other is the medical school.

The faculty raised as an issue that the strict requirement that everyone completes a postdoc abroad has led to the recent loss of a very promising faculty candidate, described as a "star."

We met with eight people described as Adjunct Academic Staff. Tables 6 and 7 list all the junior, Adjunct and Other faculty but it is not clear to us how many adjuncts there are. Adjuncts are generally not paid by the University for their teaching except for one or two people.

The student to faculty ratio seems quite adequate and the faculty seemed not to be burdened by a heavy teaching load.

### Recommendations

**Essential:** Secure new full-time faculty in the areas of Health Promotion, Health Economics, and Biostatistics, in that order, to maintain quality of existing programs.

## **6. Students**

### Observations and findings

Admission requirements for Master's degrees: a bachelor's/professional degree from a recognized academic institution in Israel or abroad with a minimal overall average grade of 80% for MPH and MSc, and 85% or an MD degree for the MHA program. Applicants to the MPH, MSc or MHA programs whose grades fall only slightly below the eligibility criteria may be accepted on probationary status and are required to obtain a minimum grade of 80% in all first semester courses. Essentially all the students accepted into these programs satisfied these requirements.

There has been a substantial increase in applicants and in enrolled students since 2014 in both the MPH and (to a lesser extent) the MHA, possibly related to the introduction of a more concentrated (one or two day) schedule. The PhD program appears to pre-select its students as the only data provided are the number of students matriculating.

Students in each Masters program must successfully complete all compulsory and elective courses required by the specific program. Thesis-track students must submit and successfully defend their theses; non-thesis-track students are required to pass a final summative exam. The dropout rate appears to be very small, but there is a substantial

proportion (approximately 50%) of Masters Students who complete the first year successfully who do not complete the program within two years. The data provided includes the IMPH making it difficult to isolate the performance of the Israeli programs. Assuming that almost all IMPH students complete in two years suggests that a significant portion of these students extend their time to completion. The graduation rate in the Israeli programs was 89% for the class of 2009-2010 compared to 53% in class of 2012-2013 for which follow-up time is shorter. There are many external causes that HUJI points to as the cause for these delays, including: **students either take on or return to full-time positions upon completion of their coursework and are unable to devote sufficient time to their research; similarly MD-MPH students return to full time medical studies upon completing their MPH courses and are often unable to devote sufficient time to their thesis during their clinical years.** The latter may diminish over time since thesis completion is now a requirement for internship. These issues exist for most Israeli MPH programs and do not excuse the very long completion times observed for thesis students.

**Demographics of students: 100-120 students total of whom 25% Israeli Arabs (a few Palestinians in the international program), approx. 20-25% from Hadassah, 50% female. Almost all non-medical students work full time.**

### Recommendations

**Essential:** The School must develop a plan for reducing the time to completion especially for Masters Students with thesis.

**Advisable:** To extend the exemplary IMPH Alumni relations program to Israeli Alumni.

**Desirable:** The limited office space available for PhD students makes it difficult for them to function effectively.

## **7. Research**

### Observations and findings

The School of Public Health at the Hebrew University has a strong interdisciplinary research program. Its strength is heavily weighted towards epidemiology. Within epidemiology, the research spans from chronic and infectious and from genetic to environmental. The program is less strong in certain areas including health promotion,

health economics, health policy and biostatistics. Specifically, the committee thought it was important to hire new faculty whose research interest was focused on innovation in bio-statistical methods. This new area would likely be synergistic with other research activities in the School at both the faculty and PhD dissertation level.

Another area that would enhance the research program is environmental sciences (including physical, chemical and biological stressors). This area of research would nicely complement the environmental epidemiology work in the School and is considered as a core area in public health.

There are a number of indicators of the School's strong performance, including the fact that (1) the School maintains a number of cohort studies (e.g., Jerusalem Perinatal Study), (2) has established initiatives (e.g., National Quality Indicators Program) that provide important data and is evidence of the School's interdisciplinary focus, and (3) has raised \$7.7M over the past 3 years across 19 faculty (3 emeriti and 2 adjunct) and has produced 5.2 peer reviewed published articles per faculty per year.

Beyond an extensive national and international list of collaborators, it is noteworthy that the school collaborates with scientists from the Palestinian Authority. The excellent IMPH program could be used as leverage to increase global health research and dissertation work.

#### Recommendations

##### **Essential:**

To maintain a strong program in public health, the committee recommends that the School needs additional faculty working in areas of health promotion, health economics, health policy and biostatistics.

##### **Advisable:**

The committee recommends that the research program be expanded to include environmental sciences.

##### **Desirable:**

The committee also recommends that the program leverages the excellent work in the IMPH program to build a quality global health research program.

## **8. Infrastructure**

### Observations and findings

The Committee observed several infrastructure issues during our site visit that are also highlighted in the self-evaluation report. The School and faculty are physically separated on the Ein Karem campus between Hadassah facilities (Building 23) and HUJI facilities (Building 4). The self-evaluation report also documents in detail some of the space limitations facing the School, including: (1) classroom space that is spread all over campus, (2) limited interaction between students in the International MPH (IMPH) and “regular” MPH because they are not located in the same building, and (3) space for research students that is severely limited in Buildings 4 and 23. The Committee believes the School is an important research and educational unit in the University and the Faculty of Medicine and deserves to have contiguous space if feasible in keeping with a professional school of such high stature.

### Recommendations

**Essential:** HUJI and the Faculty of Medicine should develop a plan and timetable for consolidating the School of Public Health and Community Medicine into high quality, contiguous and necessary space commensurate with a professional school that has such high national and international stature.

## **9. Self-Evaluation Process and implementation of previous recommendations**

### Observations and findings

The Committee was impressed by the quality and clarity of the self-evaluation report. We also commend the School for clearly identifying the faculty members who had lead

responsibility for various sections of the self-evaluation report. We found this especially helpful during our site visit.

Recommendations

**None.**

## **Chapter 4: Summary of Recommendations**

### **Essential Recommendations:**

- University should provide necessary resources to create a balance between clinical (or exact) sciences and social sciences within the School.
- Simplify the names of the School and the Departments, as discussed above.
- Elevate Health Promotion and Community Health to Departmental status to reflect its equal status with the other core areas of public health.
- Develop a plan for adding Environmental Health as a core area of education in the School.
- **Secure faculty resources necessary to ensure educational quality in Community Health and Health Promotion and in Biostatistics.**
- Develop a plan for adding Environmental Health as a core area of education in the School.
- Secure new full-time faculty in the areas of Health Promotion, Health Economics, and Biostatistics, in that order, to maintain quality of existing programs.
- **The School must develop a plan for reducing the time to completion especially for Masters Students with thesis.**
- To maintain a strong program in public health, the committee recommends that the School needs additional faculty working in areas of health promotion, health economics, health policy and biostatistics.
- HUJI and the Faculty of Medicine should develop a plan and timetable for consolidating the School of Public Health and Community Medicine into high quality, contiguous and necessary space commensurate with a professional school that has such high national and international stature.

### **Advisable Recommendations:**

- **Revise the School's Mission Statement and Goals to reflect the role of the School in improving not just global health, but the health of the Israeli population.**
- **To extend the exemplary IMPH Alumni relations program to Israeli Alumni.**



- The committee recommends that the research program be expanded to include environmental sciences.

**Desirable Recommendations:**

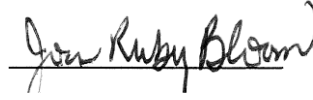
- Maintain current student faculty ratios is desirable to enable the program to continue as it has been.
- The limited office space available for PhD students makes it difficult for them to function effectively
- The committee also recommends that the program leverage the excellent work in the IMPH program to build a quality global health research program.

**Signed by:**



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Prof. Gerald Kominski- CHAIR



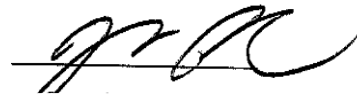
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Prof. Joan R. Bloom



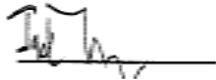
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Prof. Joseph N.S Eisenberg



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Prof. Joseph S. Pliskin



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Prof. Jack Zwanziger

**Appendix 1: Letter of Appointment**

May 2017

Prof. Gerald F. Kominski, Ph.D  
Department of Health Policy and Management  
UCLA Fielding School of Public Health  
USA

Dear Professor,

The Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) strives to ensure the continuing excellence and quality of Israeli higher education through a systematic evaluation process. By engaging upon this mission, the CHE seeks: to enhance and ensure the quality of academic studies, to provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel, and to ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

As part of this important endeavor we reach out to world renowned academicians to help us meet the challenges that confront the Israeli higher education by accepting our invitation to participate in our international evaluation committees. This process establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial enterprise.

It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **Public Health and Health System Management**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Joan Bloom, Prof. Joseph N.S. Eisenberg, Prof. Jack Zwanziger, and Prof. Joseph Pliskin.

Ms. Daniella Sandler will be the coordinator of the Committee.

Details regarding the operation of the committee and its mandate are provided in the enclosed appendix.

I wish you much success in your role as a Chair of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Prof. Ido Perlman  
Vice Chair,  
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

*Enclosures:* Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

cc: Dr. Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for QA, CHE  
Ms. Daniella Sandler, Committee Coordinator

**Appendix 2: Site Visit Schedule**

**Schedule of Site Visit - Wednesday, May 17th, 2017**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Participants</b>	
8:30-9:00	Opening Session with the Heads of the Institution (President's Office - Mount Scopus)	Prof. Menahem Ben Sasson - President Prof. Asher Cohen - Rector Prof. Barak Medina - Head, Office of Academic Assessment & Evaluation	
9:00-9:45	Travel Time (to Ein Karem Campus)		
09:45-10:10	Meeting with the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine	Prof. David Lichtstein	
10:10-11:00	Meeting with the Director of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine	Prof. Ora Paltiel <sup>1</sup>	
11:00-11:15	Meeting with Hadassah Medical Organization Representative	Prof. Avi Israeli	
11:15-11:30	<b>Break</b>		
11:30-12:20	Meeting with Senior Academic Staff	Dr. Ronit Calderon-Margalit Dr. Shai Carmi Prof. David Chinitz Dr. Hagit Hochner Prof. Avi Israeli Dr. Hagai Levine <sup>2</sup>	Prof. Orly Manor <sup>3</sup> Prof. Yehuda Neumark <sup>4</sup> Prof. Yechiel Friedlander <sup>5</sup> Dr. Raanan Raz Prof. Amir Shmueli
12:20-12:50	Meeting with Adjunct Academic Staff	Wiessam Abu Ahmad Dr. Emilia Anis Dr. Daniel Chemtob Dr. Milka Donchin	Dr. Osnat Kedar Dr. Maureen Malowany Dr. Ronit Sinnreich Dr. Chen Stein-Zamir
12:50-13:35	<b>Lunch</b>		
	<b>Closed-door Meeting of the Committee</b>		
13:35-14:30	Meeting with M.A. and Ph.D. Students		
14:30-15:15	Meeting with Alumni		

15:15-16:00	Research at the BSPH	Prof. Ronit Calderon Prof. David Chinitz Dr. Hagit Hochner	Prof. Orly Manor Prof. Ora Paltiel
16:00-16:45	Brief Tour of the Facilities	Dr. Hagai Levine Prof. Yehuda Neumark Prof. Ora Paltiel	
16:45-17:00	<b>Closed-door Meeting of the Committee</b>		
17:00-17:30	Summation Meeting with Heads of Institution	Prof. Menahem Ben Sasson - President Prof. Asher Cohen - Rector Prof. Barak Medina - Head, Office of Academic Assessment & Evaluation	