

The Hebrew University-Hadassah
School of Occupational Therapy

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Committee members:

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The Strengths and Concerns identified by the Committee are listed below.

Strengths

- The dedicated faculty committed to both undergraduate and graduate education
- The commitment, dedication and positive attitudes of the students
- A clear identification of the students with the uniqueness of the School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- The high quality and intellectual ability of students in both the undergraduate and graduate programs
- Graduates have excellent academic and clinical skills
- Development of innovative clinical placements and models of student supervision
- International recognition of the faculty contributions to occupational therapy research
- Clearly developed and focussed research programs leading to publications and dissemination at national and international conferences
- Introduction and implementation of evidence-based practice in the curriculum, teaching and research
- The introduction and implementation of the International Classification of Functioning (WHO 2001) into the curriculum, teaching and research

Concerns

- The building is inaccessible contravening the Disabled Peoples Rights Act
- The School's physical facilities are inadequate for a quality academic program
 - The teaching classrooms are overcrowded and the structure of the rooms inhibits clear vision for all students
 - Lack of air conditioning
 - Lack of computers for the number of students
 - Inadequate parking facilities
 - Poor logistics to support classroom teaching
- Alongside the geographical location of the school, the above issues reflect a feeling of isolation on behalf of both the faculty and the students. This feeling

of physical isolation, also leads to an intellectual isolation and reduces opportunity for collaboration and integration with other faculties. Both the students and the faculty feel that they are not part of the University. They don't have practical access to full university services due to distance and time (e.g., Library facilities) and they are not a full participant in the academic community.

- Inadequate number of academic positions to conduct the School's educational and research programs. This results in:
 - An unusually heavy workload for faculty members supervising masters and doctoral students
 - Poor retention of excellent staff who are forced to take up positions in other universities due to a lack of opportunity
- Lack of seed money for new faculty members to develop research programs
- Historical nature of the disparity of funding between the undergraduate and graduate program
- Inequality for faculty members because the academic staff are not considered as full university personnel
- A heavy reliance on external teachers to deliver the academic programs/curricula
- Lack of transparency around the budget which limits the ability to manage both the undergraduate and graduate programs effectively. The absence of a unified school budget makes future planning and development difficult.
- The limited budget does not allow for:
 - technical support to assist in instructional activities (e.g. PowerPoint presentations)
 - administration to support the coordination of the curriculum (30% of faculty members time is spent on basic administrative tasks)
 - teaching and research assistant support

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings the following recommendations are made:

1. Academic positions

The Committee recommends the creation of a minimum of 3 new positions. 1 position in the current academic year, 1 in the following academic year, and an additional position in the academic year of 2010. These positions should be funded from the University.

2. Integration

For the school to realize its full academic potential it should be moved to a suitable building on the medical campus.

3. School structure

The Committee recommends the appointment of a head of the School with strong academic and research qualifications who would provide leadership for future planning and development. The School's organizational structure would still include directors for the undergraduate and graduate programs.

4. Budget

The Committee recommends a review of the way the School is funded with the goal of developing a unified budget and equitable appointment and promotion process.

5. Future directions

The School and the University initiate a planning process for developing an integrated structure that would facilitate collaboration among the schools and departments within the Faculty of Medicine and across the University. A potential merger with the School of Public Health and Community Medicine should be seriously examined. Another possibility is the creation of a Center or Institute to include faculty from multiple disciplines and designed to facilitate collaborative research and grant development across departments and schools.