



Dear Colleagues,

I would like to share with you a few updates regarding academic aspects in our University.

1. Last week our colleague Prof. Edit Doron passed away. Edit was a pillar of the HU, an excellent groundbreaking researcher in the fields of Linguistics and Hebrew Language. Edit received many professional awards including the prestigious Israel Prize, and an ERC grant. Alongside her excellence in scientific research, she was known for her dedication, courage, and civic leadership in the struggle against injustice.

2. **Prizes:** Two of our faculty members received the illustrious Israel Prize this year: Prof. Emeritus Aharon Maman, Department of Hebrew Language, Faculty of Humanities, in the research fields of Jewish Languages and Literatures and Research in Folk Culture. Today Aharon serves as Vice-President of the Academy for Hebrew Language. Aharon has contributed much scientifically in the area of Hebrew Language in the Middle Ages in general and specifically in the Karaite Language. His research also extends to Contemporary Jewish Arabic and Jewish Arabic in the Middle Ages and research in the Hebrew component of Jewish Languages. Aharon used the materials from the Cairo Genizah for research into Jewish Arabic of the Middle Ages.

Prof. Emeritus Amnon Ben-Tor, Department of Archeology, Faculty of Humanities, was awarded the Israel Prize in the fields of Geography, knowledge of Israel and Archeology. Amnon has been involved in research and managing archeological digs for over fifty years, specifically the archeological digs in Tel Hatzor and other sites. His research looks at different aspects of material culture in the Land of Israel from the third century until the beginning of the first century BCE. He excels both in scientific research and in academic leadership.

Two other recipients of the Israel Prize are HU alumni: Prof. Dan Yakir, Weizmann Institute, in the research fields of Earth Sciences, Geology and Atmospheric Sciences; and Prof. Deborah Bernstein, Haifa University, in the fields of Sociology and Anthropology. Other Israel Prize recipients include: Prof. Adi Kimhi, Weizmann Institute, in the field of Life Sciences, and Prof. Mordechai Akiva Friedman, Tel Aviv University, in the field of History of the Jewish People.

Last week the Wolf Fund's Krill Prize Ceremony took place. This prize is awarded to young scientists in the fields of Science and Computer Sciences and two of our faculty members were among the ten recipients: Dr. Dafna Shahaf, School of Engineering and Computer Sciences, and Dr. Ori Katz, Applied Physics, Faculty of Mathematics and Science.

3. **Minimizing Drop-Outs:** Not a few students among the accepted to the HU have a hard time realizing their academic abilities because of personal, academic, social or economic hardships. According to the VATAT model, the University budget for these students (who are allocated about a quarter of the entire budget, a billion NIS/year) is configured by the number of students who successfully complete their studies.



The Dean of Student's office has designed a procedure detailing the necessary steps for academic units to follow up on the status of their undergraduate and graduate students, in order to help students maximize their potential and minimize the number of drop-outs. The procedure is based on each unit knowing, at any given time, the status of their students who learn there.

4. **New service for extension of visas:** As part of our ongoing efforts to improve the service for our international community, the International Office now offers a new (optional) service for the extension of visas by proxy for international visitors and students of the Hebrew University. Each guest/student who is required to extend their visa can now submit the necessary documents, passport and visa payment to the International Office. The HUJI International Office staff will take care of the submission of the documents to the Ministry of Interior and assist in solving visa issues. For further information, please contact Ms. Limor Levy, limorl@savion.huji.ac.il; Tel: 02-5882924.

5. **"Havatzalot" Program:** We are happy to announce that the IDF has chosen the HU in a competition among all Israeli universities to run the "Havatzalot" Program. This Program is parallel to the "Talpiot" Program, which has been operating at the HU for forty years. In the "Talpiot" Program 50 students study annually for an undergraduate degree in Physics, Mathematics and Computer Sciences. The students learn in uniform and are streamed into regular classrooms. They live in a designated area at the Edmond I. Safra Campus at Givat Ram. The Program has contributed greatly both to Israel's national security and to promoting scientific academic research. Approximately twenty of the graduates became faculty members, some of which are at HU. The "Havatzalot" Program was established fifteen years ago and has been operating until this year at Haifa University. This Program also accepts about fifty excellent students, in the undergraduate combined study program of Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies with a specialization in a combined program of Political Science and one other subject (Philosophy, Economics, Mathematics and Computer Sciences). Here too the students learn in uniform and are streamed into regular classrooms. They too will live in a designated area outside of the Mt. Scopus Campus. Prof. Reuven Amitai will serve as the Academic Head of the Program.

HU's choice to operate the "Havatzalot" Program is another expression of our leading role in these areas of learning and specifically in Middle Eastern Studies. This Program will draw excellent students and will contribute, directly and indirectly to the strengthening of our academic activity in Middle Eastern Studies and Political Science. Running this Program here is also an expression of the HU's commitment, as a public institution, to becoming a partner in training the future leaders of the State of Israel.

I would like to remind you again that you can take part in internal discussions of the academic faculty in order express your opinions regarding academic activity at HU. You can join [here](#) and send your comments to: hujipar@listserver.cc.huji.ac.il

Sincerely,

Barak