

NYU Tel Aviv (NYUTA) Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

*Tuesday, November 19th, 2019; President's Conference Room, Bobst Library (1218)
10:00-11:00am EDT (New York)/ 5:00-6:00pm IDT (Tel Aviv)/7:00-8:00pm GST (Abu Dhabi)*

Attendees (*Denotes joined remotely)

- David Abramson, College of Global Public Health
- Janet Alperstein, Assistant Vice President, Global Programs
- Benjamin Hary*, NYU Tel Aviv
- Ilana Golberg*, NYU Tel Aviv Internship Coordinator
- Linda Mills, Vice Chancellor, Global Programs and University Life
- Nancy Morrison, Global Programs
- Sunder Narayanan, Stern
- Marianne Petit, Associate Vice Chancellor for Global Network Academic Planning
- Mark Siegal, FAS - Biology
- Keith Woerpel, FAS - Chemistry
- Andrew Monson*, FAS - Classics (guest)

Meeting Minutes

Mark Siegal opened the meeting as acting chair in place of Ron Zweig who is on sabbatical. Benjamin Hary, Site Director, requested that Andrew Monson, who was visiting NYU Tel Aviv, join the meeting and the committee agreed.

Nancy Morrison discussed NYU's affordability initiatives and the efforts within Global Programs to make studying away more affordable. Nancy highlighted the Global Pathways Scholarship as well as other opportunities for students to fund their semester away. Janet Alperstein also discussed the work that the Global Programs Student Services and Academics teams have been doing to increase awareness of study away opportunities as well as information on financing study away. Vice Chancellor Linda Mills and the committee agreed that it is important to identify any system issues that might delay students' scholarship funds and discussed the possibility of establishing an emergency fund for those impacted by delays in financial aid disbursement and who may be prevented from studying away as a result.

Dr. Benny Hary reviewed his Site Director Report (see attached), highlighting NYU Tel Aviv's academic clusters as well as activities from NYU Tel Aviv's 10th anniversary celebration week, which included a visit by President Hamilton.

Vice Chancellor Mills invited Andrew Monson to talk about the Rothschild Foundation grant for the archaeology program. Dr. Monson noted the exceptional work being done by Yifat Thareani, the NYU Tel Aviv lecturer in connection to the archaeology program. Dr. Monson also highlighted that NYU Tel Aviv has demonstrated to the Rothschild Foundation that it can be a valuable partner for research, post doc and other opportunities.

Janet Alperstein discussed the fall and spring enrollment imbalance. She noted that running specialized offerings like the archaeology program and offering off-sequence science courses in the fall semester may help draw more students to study away in the fall semester. Dr. Alperstein offered to discuss course and enrollment data in more detail and provide custom reports for interested schools/ departments.

Mark Siegal closed the meeting by thanking all who attended.

Fall 2019 Site Director Report: NYU Tel Aviv

The 2018–19 academic year has been full of special developments at NYU Tel Aviv. This report summarizes these highlights, according to three themes: academic curriculum; strategic developments; and local engagement and co-curricular programming. Key results from the Spring 2019 Program Evaluation—in which 29 of a possible 33 respondents participated (88%)—are interspersed throughout the report.

Curriculum

The curriculum at NYUTA is strongly founded upon and continues to grow with four academic clusters in mind:

- **HJS and MEIS:** We are thrilled to report on the first semester of an NYU-led (NYUTA, Classics, and HJS) grant in Archeology. The program, totaling over \$1,000,000 to NYU, is founded upon a generous grant available to NYU undergraduate students that includes training in archeological methods, exposure and contribution to research being done in Caesarea by NYU-affiliated scholars and graduate students, study tours in the region, and a series of international symposia in which NYUTA students will present research posters. The inaugural semester brought eight students (from all three portals); we plan to fund an additional 15–20 students in the Fall 2020 and Fall 2021 semesters.
- **Science and Health:** This program began as a pathway with the NYUNY Biology Department and has since attracted interest by the College of GlobalPublic Health, the NYUNY Department of Chemistry and, for the first time in Spring 2019, NYUAD and NYUSH students (4 in total). The program offers students a number of courses to choose from as well as local academic engagement opportunities, from our internship lab program in cooperation with Tel Aviv University to visits to leading academic conferences.
- **Business and Innovation:** While our enrollment numbers of Stern students are still relatively low, we continue to develop and reinforce the added value of studying business, innovation and entrepreneurship at NYUTA: our faculty and curriculum; internships and networking opportunities; and our student-led Innovation Club. Towards this end, the site has been in regular contact with various departments and faculty at the School of Professional Studies; there is increasing interest from Tandon for a summer internship program awaiting final approval imminently which will be open to all students from emerging media departments across the university with the debut of a two-credit course in Fall 2020 with Shenkar College; an NYU Entrepreneurial Institute study tour is in development for Spring Break 2020; and we are facilitating the establishment of a Bronfman Center-led entrepreneurial program in the region.
- **Political Science and Conflict Studies:** Many students choose NYU Tel Aviv because of its geopolitical context: at the crossroads of Western and Middle Eastern politics; in the epicenter of one of the world’s most intractable conflicts. Our curriculum includes courses on Religion, State and Politics; Radical Politics; Diplomacy and Negotiation; Reporting Armed Conflict; and the History of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. All courses offer unique experiential learning opportunities in the region, including visits to Palestinian communities and Jewish settlements in the West Bank; a study tour in Cyprus; and more.

Most importantly, our students continue to appreciate the study away curriculum we have developed with our partners at NYUNY: 97% of Spring 2019 students were satisfied with their overall experience at the site; 100% said that they would recommend the site to others; and 93% were satisfied with the support and resources they received from the academic staff. Moreover, student comments in the Spring 2019 Program Evaluation Report praised our faculty, especially their inclusiveness of multiple perspectives in the classroom; the discussion-based learning environment that allows students to learn both course material and their peers' perspectives on a deeper level; and their accessibility and support to students seeking to explore co- and extra-curricular opportunities outside of the classroom.

Other Local New Developments

NYU Tel Aviv's unique study away curriculum is strongly connected to the site's continuous development of a strong network of academic partnerships, both within Israel and across the global network.

Highlights include:

- In the summer of 2019, NYUTA hosted the *Global Network for Advanced Research for Jewish Studies Colloquium: Mechanisms for Change and Development in the History of the Jews and Judaism*, with over 25 faculty and graduate students from NYU and Israeli universities attending. A second Colloquium will be held in summer 2020.
- As the last of three events that marked NYUTA's tenth anniversary in 2019, on November 11, we are organizing an international symposium, *International Higher Education in the Digital Age*. The symposium will bring together leading scholars, educators and administrators from Israel and the global network to analyze a number of critical challenges facing the university today. More than 15 NYU faculty and senior leadership from New York and Abu Dhabi have confirmed participation, as well as a similar number of Israeli stakeholders. The symposium will follow a visit by Andy Hamilton.
- Increasing numbers of NYU Abu Dhabi students are enrolling in courses at Tel Aviv: in the Spring 2019 semester, eight NYUAD students studied at NYUTA (our highest ever), including, for the first time, three science students. We hope to continue this trend, whether in the usual clusters of humanities and social science; or in new clusters in development such as business studies, science, engineering, and emerging media.
- We hope to be able to replicate our success with NYUAD to NYU Shanghai as well. Our new archeology program has shown a special attraction to NYUSH humanities students, and the opportunities available for NYUSH students in business and finance are well known.

Co-curricular Engagement

In addition to our academic curriculum, NYU Tel Aviv offers our students a number of important opportunities that emphasize the university's priorities. Turning to our local engagement and experiential learning opportunities, our students are taking advantage of the high-quality opportunities available to them: 87% of Spring 2019 students said that they attended optional NYU-sponsored activities; 96% evaluated these activities as either good or excellent.

In addition to our internship program, which was enjoyed by 39% of Spring 2019 students and offers students almost unlimited access to leading organizations throughout the Israeli professional

ecosystem, NYUTA students are engaged, more than ever before, in local interactions on their own: 37% of Spring 2019 students said that they had “10 or more” conversations each week with a person in the local community who is not connected to NYU.

Additional programs and priorities worth mentioning:

- Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity (IDBE) is at the heart of NYU Tel Aviv’s site identity. In fact, one of the areas in the Program Evaluation Report in which NYUTA historically receives exceptional student feedback is in the site’s facilitation of an inclusive community: 100% of Spring 2019 students either somewhat or strongly agreed that they developed a deeper understanding of both themselves and others. Activities that stand out include: our site’s IDBE committee is open to all students; our orientation program includes, among other activities, a “political diversity” session, during which students formulate a community code; the *Conflict and Dialogue* program provides students with a safe space to explore the region’s political complexities through group facilitation and interaction with local communities; *Scenes of Intercultural Dialogue* unique collection of visual art—created by both local Israeli artists as well as our students—on display at the academic center; and a new urban farming project in partnership with a local scouts chapter and the Association for Urban Farming will provide meaningful interactions and practical solutions to migrant communities in south Tel Aviv.
- Our site is also progressing with the university priorities of sustainability and affordability: since Spring 2017, our *Innovation Scholars* program has supported over 20 undergraduate students; our Archeology program will impact (at least) 25 students; and we have limited—and will eventually eliminate—the use of disposable dishes in both our academic center and residence hall.
- Our model of wellness counseling—whereby an external wellness counselor offers a combination of group workshops and private consultations—now in its second semester, is working very well. More than a third of Spring 2019 students took advantage of this important resource and provided positive feedback in the Program Evaluation Report. We are deepening our familiarity and network with the local industry, including participation in a two-day workshop in November organized by the American embassy and Fulbright Israel.
- We are working heavily on reviewing and updating our emergency protocols: in July 2019, we hosted Jack Briggs and Anne Marie McLaughlin in order to conduct an emergency exercise and begin revising our site contingency plan; and in October, Will Huser and Gary Leist will visit NYUTA to finalize our fire safety protocols and post order.