

Spotlight: Academic Development and Publishing Department



Photo: Maya Lahat-Kerman

Book Week, Rabin Square, June 2018

The Academic Development Department and the Publishing House functioned for years as two separate departments at the OUI. In effect, they were two ends of one process, which began with the idea for a course and was completed with publication of printed materials. The cooperation between the departments became increasingly close and, following an intense process of consideration, it was decided in 2016-2017 to merge them. Since April 2018, the (unified) Academic Development and Publishing Department has managed the development processes at the OUI under the Office of the Dean of Development and Educational Technology.

Much is invested in the OUI's unique course development process, which takes place in complete cooperation with The Center for Technology in Distance Education (Shoham), which is also subordinate to the Office of the Dean of Development and Educational Technology. The development team is composed of the academics proposing the new courses, the developers and supervisors of the course, and alongside them, the pedagogical advisors, editors, graphic designers, directors and scriptwriters, experts in intellectual property rights, technological developers, and teaching and learning experts – all working together to produce the best courses available.

Within the framework of the merge and the reorganization of the Academic Development and Publishing Department, the development process has been designed so that each course is treated as a distinct project in terms of its administration, budgeting, planning, and design. The design team works with the academic departments from the initial stages of planning, or when it is determined that revision of a course is needed. The teams collaborate with academic departments in order to utilize the resources available, and to prioritize and promote courses deemed significant in any given year.

The department works with the course development team from the moment an idea is first proposed, and continues to supervise as it is formulated and is sent to experts for input and authorization, and is published as study material in various printed and digital formats.

The OUI publishing house is among the largest and oldest in the country in the field of non-fiction and textbooks, producing hundreds of titles every year. These pedagogically and academically sophisticated books are used at numerous academic institutions throughout the country, and are considered a cornerstone of the academic culture in Israel.

The department also coordinates with the Open University of Israel Press, which produces scholarly books and original research in all fields of knowledge, following a thorough review process. Likewise, the department, in conjunction with other institutions, publishes the historical quarterly *Zmanim*, and *Megamot* – an interdisciplinary journal in the social sciences.

Department structure:

- **The Production Unit** administers the budget of the department and its operations, the computerization and information systems, and the cutting-edge digital printing house.
- **The Project Management Unit** supervises each course with a designated project management directorate, which assists in promoting the development process and effectively moving it forward.
- **The Editing and Typesetting Division** edits academic texts with expertise and helps the project teams deliver a clear and readable product.

- **The Visual Communication Division** processes printed and digital materials in order to ensure the right proportion of visibility in relation to content and design as related to the study material.

- **The Division for Intellectual Property Rights** helps course developers clear intellectual property rights for external, textual, and visual materials.

- **The Digital Express Division** provides services for all university departments seeking assistance with digital, marketing, advertising, and other materials, which together, form the academic materials package.

The Academic Development and Publishing Department is also involved with many other projects, among them the production of digital and audio versions of OUI books, collaborative efforts with book publishers, production of podcasts (audio programs), symposia and guest lectures. The department positions itself at the forefront of creativity, innovation and technology in the world of academic development, and enables the OUI to maintain its status as the leading distributor of academic publications in Israel.

