Evaluation

Evaluation processes assist OUI policymakers in improving procedures and making decisions based on data. To accomplish this, the evaluation department conducts studies and processes data on matters of importance to the OUI, and provides quality results with applicable and valid conclusions.

The department covers a variety of spheres:

- Formative evaluation of programs and effectiveness evaluation;
- Development of evaluation tools (questionnaires) for use by various OUI units;
- Intra-organizational evaluations for organizational learning processes;
- Promotion of conventional methodologies in applied research;
- Development of tools to assist in resource allocation by machine learning methods.

Below are examples of some studies conducted during the past year:

- Evaluation of the pedagogical modification program conducted by the Department of Teaching and Learning as part of an overall strategy of retention management. This year, the evaluation covered five modified courses. Insights gained from the information gathered assisted program leaders in making specific improvements in the courses, learning the strengths of the process, identifying difficult foci, and planning further improvements towards integration in other courses.

- Formative evaluation of a recently-implemented project in which experienced Arabic-speaking female students mentor their new counterparts. The evaluation benefitted the Dean of Students and the Dean of Academic Studies, who are conducting the project at study centers. Insights gained by the evaluation enabled the program to improve and to include a stage of effectiveness and demand checks.

- A study tracked OUI graduates in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, specifically the correlation between course clusters taken by students and choice of field of study (a general degree in the Humanities or Social Sciences, or a degree in a specific field). The study was followed by a survey that assisted in investigating and better understanding its results.

- A study of student attrition was conducted to investigate the rate of dropout among OUI students studying towards a bachelor's degree, and to identify student attrition predictors. The perspective of students who began their studies ten years ago was explored, as were the implications of this phenomenon for the duration of the study period and the probability of graduation.

- A study monitored the general functioning and study habits of OUI students in order to understand the main factors behind persistence, and to examine different parameters of their preferences, stability, or change over time, with emphasis on students of Ethiopian descent and ultra-Orthodox students.

- Last year, several evaluation tools were updated, in collaboration with the department for teaching and learning, including: a mid-semester advisor feedback form, evaluation of instruction aspects for new advisors, and evaluation of the observation and feedback process for advisors. The teacher survey has been significantly modified to enhance its effectiveness and enable use of the information gathered to promote processes of learning, and improve teaching on a continuous basis. Measures were taken to encourage collaboration, present the findings to the academic departments in a user-friendly manner, and discussion with the heads of departments.

- To assist in ongoing improvement of intra-organizational processes, the department evaluates the ways in which internal clients experience the services received from different university units. Several units are evaluated every year to enable completion of all units every four years. After the evaluation process was redefined last year, new tools were developed and the research method was updated. The processed findings yielded insights that were presented to the relevant parties and will be translated into work processes.