



The first year of activity of the Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity has ended, and we are happy to share with you the major events and the directions we began to pursue.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF MULTICULTURALISM AND DIVERSITY

מרכז אبحاث التعددية الثقافية والتنوع
המרכז לחקר הרב תרבותיות ומגוון

Summary of the
Academic Year
2015/16

Research



The Center supports academic research of topics of multiculturalism, with an emphasis on Israeli society. The Center initiated and participated in several conferences in the course of this year.

1

As part of the annual conference of the Center for Canadian Studies that was dedicated this year to Multiculturalism, we led a central panel with the participation of the President of the Hebrew University, [on the topic of the multicultural role of universities](#).

2

Together with the Center for Clinical Legal Education, the Multiculturalism and Diversity Clinic held [a conference on Racism](#) – "On the Psychological and sociological sources of racism through the eyes of the Law".

3

We led a discussion circle at the ESPAnet Conference on The Welfare State in Multicultural Societies.

4

In conjunction with the School of Education we hosted [Prof. Verónica Benet-Martínez](#), a psychologist who studies multicultural identity.

5

We were partners in the conference on [The City from Different Points of View](#) (together with The Nehemia Levtzion Center for Islamic Studies).



Panel: the multicultural role of universities

6

Together with the Lafer Center for Women and Gender Studies and other partners, we organized a conference on the topic of ["The New Gender Order: An Optimistic Outlook"](#) in honor of International Woman's Day. The conference included a session on female struggles across communities.

7

We supported the conference on "Religion as Law, Law as Religion" (in conjunction with the Faculty of Law).

8

The Center supported an international research workshop on the topic of the Perspectives of Children from Various Groups (in conjunction with the Faculty of Social Work).



Conference: interdisciplinary view on racism

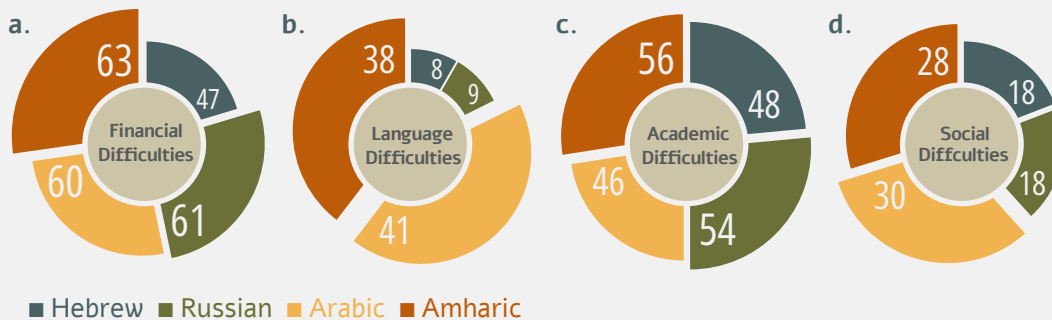
» The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity has set as its goal to promote a pluralistic, inclusive and open academic campus. We held meetings with deans and department heads throughout the university in the course of the year, in order to see how we could promote the issue of diversity as we learned the unique needs and challenges of each department. At this point, the Center has started working in several directions.

1

Research: Needs and challenges of minority students

The Center initiated a study carried out by the Unit for Excellence in Education, which analyzes the students' satisfaction surveys by segmentation into minority groups. In addition, focus groups were formed for Arab students, Ethiopian Jews, Ultra-Orthodox Jews and students from the periphery. Discussions in the focus groups dealt with the needs and feelings of those students. The research results are going to be published soon.

From The Research Results (difficulties of students by their first language)



2

Raising awareness to the issue of diversity among the academic faculty and tutors

Minority students often avoid active participation in class and are even concerned about interactions with fellow students and faculty. Here at the Center we see great importance in changing this situation. Therefore, in cooperation with the Unit for Learning and Teaching we developed workshops for lecturers and tutors on teaching in a heterogeneous classroom.

As a result of the cooperation, the subject of diversity and the treatment of students from different groups has recently been incorporated into the regular workshops of the Unit for Learning and Teaching. We also offer the various academic units a session - for example, as part of a department seminar - on the opportunities and challenges of diversity.

In these sessions we bring up issues related to the diversity of students at the school and discuss the options for creating frameworks which will enable students from different groups (particularly Jews and Arabs) to study in mixed groups. The Faculty of Science is currently looking at ways of forming combined Jewish-Arab lab teams.

3

Development of pedagogical tools for diverse teaching

For the workshops and department seminars we produced a film where students from different groups share experiences from their study at the university. A final version of the film will be available shortly, and we intend to use it as a pedagogical tool for the Unit of Learning and Teaching in the workshops for instructors and tutors.



4

Publishing project

Human diversity provides an opportunity to view reality from different perspectives. A multicultural university is one where there is a wide variety of voices, positions and points of view. Based on this precept, the Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity took part in the planning and the start of the Publishing Project, in conjunction with activists of the Libi Bamizrach ("My Heart is in the East") student group.

The project is aimed at spreading study contents on the history, literature and culture of Jews from Islamic countries in existing social sciences and humanities curricula at the university, out of the understanding that this material belongs alongside the other study material on the subjects of diaspora and immigration to Israel.

We have mapped the introductory courses in several disciplines and approached the relevant lecturers in order to offer them our cooperation and assistance in finding texts and topics by Mizrahi scholars or about the Jews in Islamic countries. We are hoping to be able to compile all the texts into a combined database.

5

Diversity policy for the Hebrew University

We are acting to ensure that the Hebrew University installs a comprehensive diversity policy (like many universities worldwide). We held a first meeting on the subject in May, with the participation of deans, academic staff and administrators.

» The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity works to promote the value of Diversity in the university space. Among the major tools for achieving this goal are courses on topics of multiculturalism which allow the students to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge on the issue of multiculturalism, to hold an intercultural dialogue, and to consciously study dilemmas pertaining to the various communities in Israel. The Center offered three academic courses this year.

The Clinic for Multiculturalism and Diversity

The Clinic for Multiculturalism and Diversity, founded by The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity, operates as part of the Center for Clinical Legal Education. Adv. Inbar Peled leads the Clinic, with the academic guidance of Prof. Michael Karayanni. This year there were 14 students who studied at the Clinic, from the Faculties of Law, Social Sciences and Humanities. The weekly meetings were dedicated to discussions of issues of multiculturalism, intercultural law, racism and discrimination.

The Clinic curriculum includes a theoretical seminar along with practical projects. As part of the seminar, the students meet with academics and social activists whose work focuses on multiculturalism. This year, the Clinic hosted, among others: **Mutasim Ali**, leader of community of asylum seekers in Israel; **Nina Halevi**, a transgender social activist; **Prof. Daniel Statman**, who lectured on multicultural theory; **Dr. Ilan Saban**, who talked with us about the Arab society in Israel; **Dr. Honaida Ghanim**, who offered a critical sociological view of multiculturalism; **Dr. Michal Schuster**, expert on linguistic accessibility; and **Leah Shakdiel**, who lectured on Activism, Religion and the State.

In the course of the year, the Clinic students submitted legal statements of claim, wrote research papers, initiated social projects and acted for the advancement of disadvantaged groups. [For the yearly summary of the Clinic, click here.](#)

Asylum seekers leader, Mutasim Ali, visits the clinic



- » The Clinic submitted a libel suit against Radio Lelo Hafsaka (Nonstop Radio) for using a picture of a student wearing a hijab as illustration of a Muslim woman who supports terrorism.
- » Students submitted a complaint in the name of a transgender woman for violence and sexual harassment on the basis of gender identity.
- » Students have been accompanying the African Hebrew Israelites around their definition as a religious community, residency and burial.
- » Students have been acting in conjunction with the Association for Ethiopian Jews for the full inclusion of students of Ethiopian descent in the educational system.
- » Students have conducted a comprehensive research of the cultural accessibility of the probation service to defendants of Ethiopian descent, and held a round table with the participation of representatives of the Probation Service and attorneys representing Ethiopian defendants.

✱ The Clinic published [Diversity Now](#) – a newsletter on issues of Diversity and Multiculturalism, distributed in Hebrew, Arabic and English.



Academic Courses

- » Two students from the Clinic started an interfaith beit midrash ("house of study") at the university. Muslim, Jewish and Christian students met once a week to study religious texts on topics such as the treatment of the Other, feminism and memory. The group was moderated by Dr. Layla Abed Rabbo and Shlomit Frumkin. At the end of the year the students held a conference on the subject of interfaith dialogue in Israel.
- » The final project at the Clinic was the production of a [Human Library](#) as part of the Musrara Mix Festival, in cooperation with the Musrara Photography School. Instead of



books, the Library hosted people from a variety of identities and backgrounds, who shared their life experiences with the "readers". The audience was invited to hear the stories of people they do not usually get to meet, such as members of the African Hebrew Israelite community from Dimona, representatives of the Bedouin Dispersals, transgender individuals, Ethiopian Jews, asylum seekers, and others. Students from the Clinic served as "librarians" and mediated between the festival audience and "books" from a variety of Israeli communities.



Top to Bottom: Interfaith Beit Midrash; Nina Halevi, transgender activist participating the human library (Photography: Asaf Elbuher, Musrara); Academic Director, Prof. Michael Karayanni.



The Corner Stones Course

The course offered to students of Life Sciences, dealt with issues of multiculturalism in Israeli society on the basis of the analysis and discussion of case studies. The course was taught by Michal Barak. An additional Corner Stones course will be taught next year by Dr. Taufik Deadlee, in Arabic.

The Multiculturalism Workshop

The Workshop started to operate this year under the auspices of the Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity. The bi-weekly meetings hosted scholars for discussions that exposed the participants to the interdisciplinary research in the field. The workshop was led by Prof. Michael Karayanni, the Academic Director of the Center, and Ms. Leah Shakdiel.

In the course of the year we hosted many authors from Israel and from abroad, who invited the participants to use critical tools to examine the issue of multiculturalism. Among our guests were Dr. Yoni Mendel, Dr. Bashir Bashir, Prof. Shauna Van Praagh, Prof. Gila Stopler, and Prof. Gideon Sapir.

Lectures on Cultural Competence in the Medical Professions now being offered by the center in cooperation with the Jerusalem Intercultural Center. The Center held its first lecture this year in the School of Occupational Therapy. Next year we are planning additional lectures and workshops in the School of Dentistry and in the School of Pharmacy. As part of our future cooperation with the School of Public Policy, the Center will offer an academic unit on the subject of the importance of diversity in employment and in public service.

Doctoral Scholarships



In the academic year 2015-16 the Center supported three PhD candidates whose research deals with multiculturalism.

Recipients this year were:

1. **Antigone Eshkar** from the School of Social Work, whose research deals with Giving among Minorities – the case of the Arab minority in Israel.
2. **Hanin Majadele** from the School of Social Work, who studies Early Childhood Daycare Frameworks in the Arab Population, in the contexts of religion, gender and concepts of welfare.
3. **Bella Kovner** from the Institute of Criminology, whose research focuses on the Arrests of Children and the Accessibility of Justice in East Jerusalem.

In this context, this year was characterized by a sharp increase in the number of arrests of children in East Jerusalem, thus Mrs. Kovner and us held a round table on the topic with the participation of University staff, representatives from the Public Defense office, the police, the municipality, and civil society organizations.



The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism and Diversity works in cooperation with the School of Education in order to establish a research group of educators on the topic of binational common education in Israel. The group is supposed to start working next year.

Research group

The Center for the Study of Multiculturalism
and Diversity in Digital Media



Bilingual
Website
(Hebrew-Arabic)



English
Website



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