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Yezreel Valley College

Reflections and Issues:
Internationalization of Curriculum at YVC

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MISSION

- Becoming a meaningful academic player in a global world of higher education by expanding collaborations with academic institutions around the globe.
- Building Bridges across cultural divides and creating a tolerant and supporting environment where students and academic and administrative staff of diverse backgrounds can meet and interact.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- Expand comparative cross-cultural and cross-national research
- Networking – extending individual, team and institutional international partnerships
- Increasing international visibility of YVC
- **Internationalization of Curriculum**
- Building organizational structures supporting YVC Internationalization

Actions for Strategic Goal D - Internationalization of Curriculum

- Joint teaching and/or faculty exchange
- Courses on Jewish-Christian relations for international students -
The Galilee Center for studies on Jewish - Christian relations
- Pilot exchange project on International Organizational Development administered by the MA program in Organizational Development and Consulting at YVC.
- **Forming research groups and community of practice on culture-sensitive teaching and learning.**
- Amending curriculum of courses and learning/teaching pedagogy/practices



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Internationalization of Curriculum - Time Frame

ACTION	YEAR	MONTHS	REMARKS	ACTION	YEAR	MONTHS	REMARKS
1	2012-2015	36	ongoing	4	2014-2015	20 months	Initiated Dec. 2013
2	2014-2016	24 months	To be initiated in Oct. 2014	5	2015-2016	12 months	To be initiated Oct. 2015
3	2014-2016	24 months	To be initiated in July 2014	6			



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Promoting Factors (Strengths and Opportunities)

- **Champion and small support network**
- **Convergence with:**
 - **Parts of Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals**
 - **Faculty's needs (based on needs assessment)**
 - **the leader's (champion's) research/professional interests and educational credo/orientation**
 - **the leader's (champion's) competence in team/partnership building**
- **YVC diverse environment – “natural” laboratory**



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Inhibiting Factors (Weaknesses and Threats)

- **Limited Resources Devoted to IRIS Project (HR, Time, Budget)**
- **Inadequate Alignment among Organizational Elements:**
 - YVC organizational structure
 - Strategies
 - Shared Goals
 - Staff
 - Competencies and Capabilities
 - Systems
- **Competition in YVC environment**
- **Restrictions Imposed by CHE and EU Institutions**



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Case Study - Research/Project Group on Culture Sensitive- Competent Teaching and Learning Why?

- **Musicians Engaging Diversity in a Global and Divided World
(Herbie Hancock Imagine Project)**

"The question is again before us today as we confront an economic and political integration on the scale of the planet: shall we be, intimately and subjectively, able to live with the others, to live as others, without ostracism but also without leveling? The modification in the status of foreigners that is imperative today leads one to reflect on our ability to accept new modalities of otherness..." (Kristeva 1991: 1-2).

Case Study - Research/Project Group on Culture Sensitive-Competent Teaching and Learning

What? (Goals)

- Study the teaching and learning patterns in diverse students' groups (courses, programs)
- Igniting and developing internationalization of curriculum in YVC

The central research questions/issues

- **The impact of the socio-political and cultural context on higher education on learning and teaching of diverse students' population (local and international)**
 - Differences in the **culture of learning** – preferences stemming from culture-bound patterns (passive vs. active learning, experiential vs. traditional learning through lectures)
 - Sensitivity to diverse students' needs (cultural background, social status, e.g., choice of texts for English proficiency courses that respect local cultures)
 - Teaching of specific courses while underscoring cultural sensitivity (qualitative research methods, comprehension of scientific terms, social and behavioral sciences)

**Case Study - Research/Project Group on Culture Sensitive-Competent
Teaching and Learning
How?**

Action Plan

- **Seminar for Academic Staff**
 - Culture-sensitive learning and teaching
 - Teaching in English
- **Action-Research: Mapping of issues/questions concerning multicultural/culture sensitive learning and teaching and modes of coping**
 - Literature review
 - Individual interviews with academic staff in YVC and additional colleges, partners in IRIS/TEMPUS (Collaboration with Other Academic Institutions in Israel and in Europe)



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Case Study - Research/Project Group on Culture Sensitive-Competent Teaching and Learning

Fostering vs. Inhibiting Factors and Challenges

Fostering Factors

- Incentives for faculty to be involved (conference presentations, ensuing publications)
- Linking to existing projects, centers - creating partnerships

Inhibiting Factors

- Limited Resources Devoted to IRIS Project (HR, Time, Budget)
- Complications Related to Formal and Institutional Arrangements (CHE, HORIZON 2020, ERASMUS+)
- Competing Tasks/Projects



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Case Study - Research/Project Group on Culture Sensitive-Competent Teaching and Learning

Challenges

- **Raising Awareness** re: internationalization of curriculum among the faculty, academic administration and students in the institution (YVC): infusing the ideas of diversity management and cultural sensitivity.
- **Implementation of a local initiative** of curriculum internationalization and **transformation into an international project.**
- **Maximizing strengths and opportunities and minimizing weaknesses and threats**