

Framework Plan (FWP)–University of Haifa

Work Package #1– Preparation University of Haifa

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Target Group #1 – People with disabilities

Challenges and barriers

- Learning difficulties, mental and physical disabilities
- Stigma and social isolation
- Lack of social awareness
- Physical environment is not accessible enough
- Lack of knowledge/information of the services offered by the University for target group
- Lack of a centre that provides ALL services to target group within one unit.

Existing Support services inside the university

- Offering diagnostic processes for locating learning disabilities. Students with learning disabilities can receive assistance from tutors who are outstanding students and participate in study skill workshops. Students with learning disabilities are eligible for study aid. Payment for lessons is subsidized. An academic counselor will help the students in coping with various problems by preparing a study plan and arranging lessons and a tutor, and in acquiring study skills. Students may receive studying adaptation.
- Students with temporary or permanent physical and mental disabilities are applied for the relevant assistance: blind students and those with hearing impairment can receive academic and social help by a tutor; a counselor for accessible matters diagnoses their situation and needs and refer them to the relevant services (inside the University –tutoring, psychologist, psychiatrist, and outside the University--National Security Services (BituachLeumi).
- Occupational consulting services - providing guidance for choosing a major and a career path for students from target group.
- Offering supporting technologies for target groups
- Recording lessons

University and national regulations

- Equal rights of person with disabilities law, 1998. The basic principle is the rights of persons with disabilities and the commitment of Israel society to those rights are based on recognition of the principle of equality, of the worth of each person created in the image and on the principle of human dignity.
- Admission standards according to the Israeli Council of Higher Education .

New support services for target group:

Person in charge: Ms. Nitza Arie and Ms. Kalanit Kleemer

1. Establishing a new party for people with physical disabilities (SAMAN)

This party is aimed at increasing the involvement of students with disabilities in the academic life, bring for a social change and a change in the University's policy towards people with disabilities, raise the public awareness (in and out the University) of the challenges and contribution of target group, creating a space for meaningful dialogue between students with disabilities and different department at the University (Rector office, Dean's office, Student Union) and also groups outside the U (Social Security and MALAG). Promoting activities such as: collaborating with Access Israel on a local campaign for advancing inclusive education and equal opportunities for people with disabilities, conferences etc.

February 2016-June 2016

1. Establishing the students party (SAMAN)
2. Opening event (keynote lecture) for introducing the new party, its aims and planned activities (May, 2016)
3. Regular meetings
4. Participating in students union meetings

October 2016-June 2017

1. The group is meeting once a month
2. At least one event each semester for stakeholders at the University
3. At least one event a year for students and staff at the University
4. At least 15 members

October 2017-June 2018

1. At least one event/conference/campaign each semester for students and staff
2. Increasing the number of members.

2. Internship program for students with disabilities

Person in charge: Ms. Limor Indibo

Today, one of the main challenges of people with disability is finding a career path after their studies. This program is aimed at allowing them to experience the job market by participating in one year internship program. After this experience, the students will create a network for their future, that will allow them to integrate in the work market.

October 2016-June 2017

1. Pilot - Approaching the students and offering them to participate in this internship program.

October 2017-June 2018

3. Planning a student support centre, that provides ALL support services within one unit.

Challenges and barriers

Currently, most of support services that are offered to target group are given by administrative and professional staff within the Dean of students' office. However, there is no one central place that coordinates all the services, information, data etc. Different units are located in different places around the Campus, and there is no one person that manages and coordinates these services. We would like all small units to work in harmony as to provide people with disabilities all assistance and support to enable them to access higher education, complete their degree successfully and have a good learning experience.

The program will be developed with the assistance of Department of Special Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Haifa.

October 2016-June 2016

1. A delegation from University of Haifa which comprised of administrative and professional staff dealing with learning disabilities, psychological and physical difficulties will visit Masaryk University in order to learn from their good practices about their unique and innovative support centre for students with special needs (Teiresias).

October 2016- October 2018

1. Constructing a working plan and a model for establishing a support centre at the University.
2. Building a leading team for the centre.
3. Applying for external foundations for financial aid.

Target Group #2 – Minority (Druze Men)

Challenges and barriers

- Lack of basic requirements to enter HEI (don't have Matriculation Certificate or didn't take Psychometric Exam).
- Lack of awareness or of the importance of higher education or knowledge/information about the University or Academic studies
- Lack of social awareness: the Druze community is relatively closed society, they do not have daily contact with the Jewish society, which can influence the priorities of young people in general and veterans in particular.
- Lack of Motivation to achieve higher education
- Coming from low socio-economic: study costs, housing and living expenses are very high and they prefer to go out to the working market.
- Traditional reasons: very few Druze men after their military service choose academic studies. This is a social norm; marry at a young age; lack of family and societal pressure on Druze soldiers to continue their studies at the University etc.

Existing Support services inside the university

- We offer a Druze counselor (from the University team) that helps them with all University bureaucracy
- Unique scholarships for Druze students

- Offering academic support (privet tutoring and academic mentoring)
- Orientation days (exposure to the relevant Target Group) for Druze high schools.

University and national regulations

- There is not a national regulation regarding this Target Group, but it is quite known to the government.

New support services for target group:

Person in charge: Mr. lead Kizel

- Apply to the „Foundation for Demobilized Soldiers“ to ask their assist with information about Druze Soldiers and to receive their contact information. Approaching them personally as to encourage them to register to the Pre-Academic Studies to complete their Matriculation Certificate and Psychometric Exam in order to have the minimum requiments be accepted to HEI.
- Conferencessabout the Academic offers and studies in HU for the Druze population.
- Apply to the Druze Regional Councils Forum to encourage young Druze men to achieve academic studies.
- Find financial resources to fund scholarships for them.
- Building a program of special admission and support their studies at the University (a personal mentor, private extra lessons, reinforcement courses and academic adviceaimed at identifying where the student’s specific difficulties).

October 2016-June 2017

1. At least once a month one high school from the Druze Regional Council will be hosted at the
2. University for Orientation days.
3. Meeting with the Druze Regional Councils Forum
4. Building a program which help Druze student to be admitted to the University and to combine between their work and study
5. Finding more financial suport and scholarships for the Druze students

October 2017-June 2018

1. Incearsing the number of Druze students accepting to the University.
2. Building a five-day preparatory course before the start of the academic year for Druze and Arab students. The course includes a familiarization program with the university and its libraries, study skills, computer skills, an academic lecture, meetings with students, and so on.

Target Group #3 – Women

Challenges and barriers

- Young female students who are mothers of small children undergo difficulties in finding a professional place to leave their babies/children while they are returning to study after maternity leave, which leads them sometimes to dropout their studies.
- Coming from low socio-economic and don't have the financial support to leave their babies in a day care.

Existing Support services inside the university

- Coordinator/contact person under the Dean of Students office for pregnant women and mothers.

University and national regulations

- There are University regulation about pregnancy and maternity leave (in Hebrew) (http://dekanat.haifa.ac.il/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=109&Itemid=371)

New support services for target group:

Person in charge: Ms. Kalanit Kleemer

- *Establishing a day care for babies and children at the Dorms. The service will be subsidized for students.*

The University has allocated room for this day care which will be built in the new dormitories in 2020. This initiative will be developed with a consultation of the Department of Counseling and Human Development at the Faculty of Education, University of Haifa. It will be an experiential day care that will serve as a model for other Israeli HEI and other organizations.

October 2016-June 2018

1. Planning and finding the financial support for a day care service inside the University.

Target Group #4 – Students dropping out of University

Challenges and barriers

Access means not only allowing people from target groups to enter HEI, but also enabling enrolled students to complete their degree. For if they were admitted to the University but ultimately dropped out of their studies then the University is not really accessible for them. The aim is to improve graduation rates by locating the students who have low grades which are most likely drop out without completing their degree (today we speak about 17%!!)

The challenges of students at higher risk for dropping out are:

- Mental and learning difficulties

- Language barrier
- Lack of awareness on the support that is offered by the University
- “Quiet dropout,” which implies that a student enters dropout trajectory without any institutional notice.
- Lack of awareness from the academic staff on the difficulties and invisible disabilities.
- lack of data as regards the institutional dropout, including number of students, their characteristics and the causes of dropping out, also limits the ability to address this issue.

Existing Support services inside the university

- Learning assistance
- Tutoring
- Scholarships
- Personalmentor,
- Private extra lessons, reinforcement courses and academic advice aimed at identifying where the student’s specific difficulties lie.

University and national regulations

NONE

New support services for target group:

Person in charge: Mr. Haim Kaplan

Identifying the struggling students and providing them the assistance they need to complete their studies.

In order to identify these struggling students we plan to approach them personally (could be by a letter from the head of the school, or an appointment with an academic consultant)and invite them to advise with professional. Advising is most often provided by the school faculty, either through a policy of open access to faculty members or by appointing designated faculty members as advisors or even by professional psychology. What is needed is institutional mechanisms, and especially inter-institutional coordination, in order to enable early detection of potential dropouts. These mechanisms are both formal and informal and involve academic and administrative efforts, organizational culture and cooperation. Another idea is that those who are identified as struggling are invited to attend regular meetings with an advisor who tracks their progress. Sometimes these sessions included signing a written learning contract, which defines the student’s obligations. This provides the student with a clear plan towards graduation and sends the message that someone on campus is paying attention and can be summoned for help. We also think that a personal, tailor-made solution for each student is needed and emotional support and tutoring.

New proposed policies and regulations

1. Publish the retention rates of higher educational institutions in order to create pressure on schools to focus on improving retention
2. Raising the stake holders’ awareness that dropping out should be considered as a process rather than as an event, in which the withdrawal is its last stage. Hence, retention may be guided by a “preventive” approach, in which programs proactively identify populations “at-risk” for retention and proactively initiate interventions to prevent students from “entering” the process of retention.

3. Decide the dropout rates.

March 2016-June 2016

1. Pilot – sending letters to students from this TG and offering them the services.

October 2016-June 2017

1. Evaluate the pilot from March 2016-June 2016.
2. Enlarging the TG by approaching students from other departments (Education, Humanities etc.)

October 2017-June 2018

1. Enlarging the TG by approaching students from additional degrees (MA).