

Community-Engaged Courses in Israel

Toolkit

USIP Research Project¹

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INTRODUCTION /

ABOUT THE CAMPUS-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The Campus-Community Partnership for Social Change (the Partnership) is the only organization working to engage institutions of higher education, faculty and students in action for social justice and human rights in Israel. It aims to advance a socially responsible academia, develop the civic engagement and leadership of a new generation of students, and bring academic knowledge to enhance the practices and strategies of community organizations.

The Partnership's main activities include:

- Nationwide advocacy encouraging the Council for Higher Education in Israel and academic institutions to develop a policy of social engagement.
- Support of faculty members in developing community-engaged courses that combine theoretical study with student internships in organizations working toward human rights and social justice.
- Organization of workshops, conferences and seminars, including statewide seminars for student activists to develop students' critical social thought and knowledge, providing them with tools for change, and consolidating their commitment to act for human rights and social justice.

Through these activities, and particularly the support of community-engaged courses in a wide range of disciplines, the Partnership has:

- Worked to engage Israeli academic institutions in human rights and social activism;
- Created spaces for students from often extremely disparate backgrounds, and more specifically for Jewish and Palestinian students in Israel, to deeply engage in collective dialogue and in human rights activism together;
- Contributed to greater capacity of human rights organizations in Israel through the formation of ties between civil society organizations and institutions of higher education, and the increased participation of a new generation of young adults in promoting human rights.

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP'S COMMUNITY-ENGAGED COURSES

Since 2006, the Partnership has spearheaded the development of service-learning in Israel as a new platform for student activism, supporting in the past six years over two-dozen community-engaged human rights courses, in a wide range of disciplines, at 15 different campuses. Community-engaged courses, courses that combine theoretical study with student internships in organizations working toward human rights and social justice, are a special avenue for engaging Jewish and Palestinian students in Israel in joint dialogue and activism.

The Partnership's community-engaged courses value classroom diversity, enabling rare interaction and dialogue among students from different social groups. The students participating in the courses come from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, and include Jews and Palestinians, immigrants and native born Israelis. For many of these groups the campus is the first and sometimes only site of encounter with the other. The Partnership's community-engaged courses leverage on this encounter – to promote joint action for a shared society.

By supporting community-engaged courses the Partnership seeks to broaden students' understanding of the social context of their academic studies, guiding them to develop skills for social change and to deepen their civic responsibility.

The courses included in this toolkit are all academic courses in recognized and accredited public institutions of higher education.

The following are principles, elements and characteristics shared by the courses:

- All courses generate activities whose objective is to diminish social inequality.
- All courses integrate academic and community actions that feed and enrich one another, while providing a new perspective and tools for critical social analysis.
- All courses were developed to correspond to the needs of the community, and are conducted in partnership with members of the community/social change organizations.
- The action component of the courses is developed with the community/social change organization, and there is a clear agreement between the community/social change organization and course faculty and coordinators regarding students' engagement.
- All courses are implemented over time for the benefit of providing sustainable tools for individual and community change among disadvantaged groups or communities.
- All courses propose a long term relationship with groups, communities, or social organizations, and promote civic engagement, as opposed to courses whose action component is primarily service related.
- In all courses students' engagement is at least four hours per week, for at least the length of an academic year.
- Courses' academic requirements, methodologies, and contents are diverse and creative, and are appropriate and effective in advancing action in the community and advancing students' learning.
- Some courses are interdisciplinary, and therefore open to students from a wide range of disciplines.
- Be sure to click on course, department, or instructor titles for relevant links.

1 / GENDER



Legal Feminism and Social Change

Adv. Dana Myrtenbaum, Noor Falah and Dr. Sagit Mor

Faculty of Law

University of Haifa

This unique program is the joint initiative of the Faculty of Law at the University of Haifa and Itach-Ma'aki (Women Lawyers for Social Justice) – a Jewish-Arab feminist legal advocacy organization. The program's vision is to promote access to justice for women from disadvantaged communities and marginalized groups, to challenge the existing power structure of the legal justice system and its gender and culture blindness, and to create an alternative model of community law that forms partnerships with a range of organizations (civil society, public service institutions, etc.).

The program trains women who are leaders in underserved communities (Jewish women, non-Jewish women and Palestinian women in Israel), providing them with knowledge of the legal justice system, civil society, community organizing and advocacy, and feminist perspectives. The women are trained to become "legal leaders" and to promote their seed projects in the public sphere. Once their initial training is completed (during the summer period), they are paired with law students, and together they form joint teams that design and implement the seed projects. These projects are initiated by the legal leaders, and developed based on their concerns, life stories and previous activism. Each team is guided by the program's staff, and by a steering committee that is specially formed. Project implementation is throughout the year, and often continues past the summer and into the following year.

Throughout the academic year, the legal leaders and the law students undergo a joint group process that includes acquaintance, exposure to various social, legal and feminist issues, and familiarity with the seed projects that were formed within the program in previous years. The meetings of the large group are conducted on a weekly basis, with the facilitation of the program's staff members – a Jewish female lawyer, and a Palestinian female psychologist. Guidance and supervision of the project teams and participants is implemented on several levels – the large group level, the project team level, and the personal level. Law students participating in the program also undergo an academic seminar on legal feminism – a regular academic seminar focusing on critical feminist theories, legal feminism and the connections between theory and activism.

The program enfold three central elements. First, it forms links between academia and Jewish and Palestinian underprivileged communities in Israel, through the legal leaders that become mediators between the community and the academic world. Second, it makes the legal justice system accessible to underprivileged communities, not only through lawyers who may serve as mediators but through the legal leaders, through educational and advocacy work in the community, and by bringing members of the communities to express their concerns in the public sphere and the legal system. Third, it integrates feminist tools and principles in a comprehensive manner. These include: mentoring circles; interdisciplinary methods, work and study; integration of knowledge from the field and from the academic world; multiculturalism and identity politics; critical perception of power relations; and feminizing the mainstream. The program's distinctiveness is further in the way it ties together several important contributions. It makes heard the voices of marginalized women, brings the community to become an integral part of the academy, presents an innovative model for advancing social change, emphasizes multiculturalism and diversity, acts to change the legal academic discourse, and further, to change the internal discourse of feminist civil society organizations.

Feminism, Accessibility and the Law & Marginalized Populations, Human Rights and Social Change

[Orly Kuzin-Malachi](#) and Adv. [Shiran Reichenberg](#)

Faculty of Law

and Dr. [Edith Blit-Cohen](#)

School of Social Work

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

A joint initiative of the Faculty of Law and the School of Social Work, this interdisciplinary program forms unique links between both fields of knowledge and practice – addressing issues of social exclusion, feminism, accessibility to the law, and the empowerment of communities. ***Law students and social work students participating in the program study together in an academic course, and form mixed teams that engage in women's community empowerment frameworks in marginalized communities in Jerusalem.*** The program aims: to provide students with knowledge of basic concepts and theories related to social exclusion, human rights, social justice and feminism; to examine the process of social exclusion and its affect on disempowered populations, particularly women (immigrant women, minority women, teenage girls at risk, women with disabilities, etc.); to provide students with knowledge of achieving accessibility to the law, and social and legal strategies for coping with domination and oppression, and further study the role of social work and community/social law in socially re-integrating marginalized women.

The joint teams of law students and social work students facilitate throughout the year groups of women from the social periphery of Jerusalem, including both Jewish and Palestinian neighborhoods. Each group meets within the framework of a women's civil society organization, or a local public service center (for example, welfare bureau or community center). The student teams design the facilitation program, based on the women's needs and desires, with each student contributing professional and theoretical knowledge from her respective field. Throughout the meetings students present information about civic and social rights and ways for the women to access their rights through available services. They further explore with the women topics of interest that they wish to study, and initiate with them short-term projects in the community (for example, a staged court trial, a community gathering focusing on a specific problem, a booklet of rights and services, etc.). The program sets several principles that guide students' engagement – understanding and acknowledgement of the women's life situation, sharing and avoidance of hierarchy, belief in the women's ability to succeed, and emphasis on the joint process. Students do not necessarily form new groups each year, but continue work with groups that were formed in previous years. The program further aims to empower the women through the connections that it creates in the community – between the women, the students, the civil society organizations, and the local social services.

The encounter between students of social work and students of law raises dilemmas regarding the inter-professional relations of lawyers and social workers, and its potential in empowering excluded populations. The opportunity to study with students from the other discipline enriches their experience in class, and in the field – altering students' thinking about their work with the women, and about other social problems. Course sessions address: definitions and explanations of social exclusion; the connections between social exclusion, human rights and accessibility to the law among marginalized populations; community/social law, equality, social justice and exclusion; women, poverty and social exclusion; coping with oppression and exclusion and strategies for social change; and bringing about processes from social exclusion to inclusion and containment.

Strengthening the Welfare of Women Through Awareness and Empowerment

Prof. Ariella Friedman and Abeer Halabi

[Department of Behavioral Sciences](#)

Zefat Academic College, Safed

The course focuses on the empowerment of women – both the female students in the course, and the women in crisis with whom they work in the field. It addresses issues related to various situations of crisis – including poverty, violence, disease, sexual abuse, and psychological internalization of inequality – and discusses the relationship between the status of women, their multiple social and gender roles, and welfare. It aims at making students more aware of social injustice and of their power to serve, providing them with knowledge of intervention methods and particularly with the skill of facilitating support groups as a key method for empowerment and consciousness raising.

The Zefat Academic College is located in the northern geographic periphery, and has a majority of Palestinian students. Therefore, importantly, the course is also a rare setting for the empowerment and consciousness raising of the students themselves.

The course is co-taught by a Jewish faculty member and a Palestinian coordinator who also guides the students in the field. Students participating in the course are Palestinian and Jewish women (either an equal number of each group or a majority of Palestinian women). They are active in organizations that work to safeguard women's well-being and rights, combating sexual abuse, violence, poverty, and more. The organizations are located in the surrounding communities, with for the most part each student serves her respective national group. Students are engaged in shelters and transitional housing for battered women, guidance of women in poverty through organizations that advance social and economic rights, facilitation of immigrant women groups, support of women in employment programs, as well as women in educational empowerment and awareness groups and guidance services. At the beginning of the year students are directed to become acquainted with the organization, and later on they develop a group project.

The learning in the class sessions is divided into two main parts. The first semester is devoted to learning about women in distress and related issues such as physical health, mental health, violence against women, poverty of women, multiple female roles, etc. The emphasis is on a multicultural, critical feminist analysis of these issues and their implications for the women, and of the factors leading or influencing the contexts of women in distress. Further, an inter-cultural perspective is highlighted throughout the discussion, reflecting the different social groups represented in the classroom, as well as others outside of the classroom. Students are encouraged to discuss their everyday experiences, exploring body image, sexuality, violence, role coercion, etc. The second semester is devoted to learning group facilitation as a key method for working with women in distress, including facilitation principles and analysis of group processes. Students take turns facilitating class sessions. The facilitation in class is a significant step toward students' empowerment as it encourages students to express themselves and lead a group process, something which Palestinian female students do not have the opportunity to do in other courses. Through practicing and experiencing group facilitation and consciousness raising in class students gain the tools and self confidence to do so in their activism frameworks.

2 / MINORITY RIGHTS

Rights of the Palestinian Arab Minority in Israel

Dr. [Yousef Jabareen](#) and Dr. [Ilan Saban](#)

Faculty of Law

University of Haifa

This course at the Faculty of Law of the University of Haifa connected Palestinian and Jewish law students with Palestinian civil society organizations in Israel, and Jewish civil society organizations that implement substantial programs for advancing the rights of the Palestinian minority – to lead to a deeper understanding of the Palestinian minority's legal status in Israel, and to enhance the work of the organizations. The course aimed to examine and develop wide-ranging insights relating to the capacity of the law to serve as a tool for social change.

The course did not send students to a general internship at the civil society organizations. Rather, faculty members and members of the civil society organizations together chose relevant projects that allowed student involvement, and that would have benefited from the guidance of both the faculty members and the organizations' staff. Projects chosen were those perceived as key to understanding the situation of the Palestinian minority in Israel, rendering primary questions and complexities and also contributing to the advancement of the rights of Palestinians in Israel. Students' worked in mixed teams of Palestinians and Jews, and were mainly involved in legal work, aiming to enhance the organizations' efforts in the legal field. Their engagement was therefore corresponding to the different stages of legal work (including research and formulation of the appeals or claims, etc.), comparative research, writing of position papers, or advocacy. Generally their involvement remained within the borders of the legal profession, and did not entail direct work with the community. The course also acted as a type of independent organization, and initiated its own projects to promote issues that were not already addressed by other organizations.

Examples of projects in which students were engaged include: a damages claim for discrimination on the basis of nationality in the context of entrance to public places (profiling); an appeal disputing the age limitation in the application process and acceptance conditions of academic institutions, which discriminates against Arab young adults; campaign for increasing the number of eye doctors eligible to grant certificates of legal blindness, and for advancing the establishment of a library for blind Palestinians in the area of Palestinian towns and villages in the Galilee; and legal work to bring about the connection of schools at unrecognized villages in the Negev to electricity and water.

The course acted to form a space of partnership and co-existence through the co-teaching of a Palestinian and a Jewish faculty member, and the participation of Palestinian and Jewish students who worked together in mixed teams. It further hosted Palestinian representatives of civil society organizations in class, viewing this direct encounter as a model and inspiration to the students, defining the guest speakers as activists in the social and legal field. The theoretical issues in class were often discussed through the analysis of case studies and events, and included: the Orr Committee Report and the history of the Palestinians' relations with public institutions, the police, etc; the citizenship law and the decision to prohibit family unification (limiting ties between Palestinians in Israel and in the PA, problems of identity, etc.); the status of Palestinian women – tensions between cultural and state institutions, and the multiple struggle of the Palestinian women; Palestinian persons with disabilities in Israel (lack of access to legal rights, small number of treatment centers) – problems of a disadvantaged group within a minority; military and civil service – different paradigms of commitments and rights, and different models of civil service and their rationalizations.

Community Interpreting

The late Prof. Miriam Schlesinger, Ms. Tanya Voinova, Dr. Michal Schuster

[Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies](#)

Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan

Words to the passing of Miriam: http://www.est-translationstudies.org/news/2012_shlesinger.html

The course trains bilingual students to leverage their knowledge of a second language for the benefit of those who have difficulty accessing basic public services because they do not speak Hebrew. ***It is open to students from all academic departments at the university, and inherently brings together students from varied backgrounds. It is the first course on campus that allows them to enter dialogue with others who are from different national, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Students – speakers of Arabic, Russian, Amharic, (and also a few who speak Spanish and English) in addition to Hebrew – spend four hours each week volunteering as language mediators (translators/interpreters). They translate at a range of civil society and public service settings: hospitals (primarily mediating between Arabic-speaking patients, many of them from Gaza, and the Hebrew-speaking medical staff); rehabilitation facilities (assisting therapists in diagnosing and treating children who have undergone trauma); human rights organizations (that provide health and welfare services); well baby clinics; immigration centers; and municipal services and social security offices. The beneficiaries are often members of the students' respective communities/social groups.***

The course encourages students to be agents of social change and empowers them by capitalizing on their bilingual knowledge and leading them to apply it to reduce inequality and advance language minorities. Students are taught the theoretical knowledge and practical skills required of a community interpreter. Their language skills are crucial in easing tension and facilitating communication in the charged context of translation at public institutions providing basic services. Their interpreting in these settings promotes an understanding of the importance of language access, enhancing public awareness to the consequence of language access for securing human rights.

The issues and concepts taught in the course may be divided into two main parts: the basic technical skills (practice) and the critical social awareness and knowledge (theory) required of a community interpreter. The theoretical issues discussed in the course include: the significance of language rights, background in the field of community interpreting, challenges faced by the individual interpreter, and dimensions of the settings to which students are likely to be assigned. The main practical components in the course include: role-plays simulating interaction characteristic to the settings in which students volunteer; note-taking techniques and exercises designed to foster strategies for more effective interpreting and to bolster students' confidence in their own ability to handle longer stretches of discourse; and domain-specific terminology in the students' respective languages.

3 / EDUCATION



Education and Social Change

Dr. Asmahan Harzallah and Dr. Dalya Markovich
School of Education
Beit Berl College, Beit Berl

The course discusses informal education as a potential sphere for civic activism and social change, and the different ways in which informal education leverages diverse models of social action and the advancement of human rights. The experience in the course is designed to provide students with tools and skills for civic activism, and with critical awareness that will permeate their teaching in the formal education system. The theoretical and practical study is intended to reflect and analyze some of the dilemmas, contradictions and new horizons characterizing this distinct sphere.

The primary and secondary education systems in Israel are separate for Jews and Palestinians, and teacher training programs are also separate for the most part, including at Beit Berl Academic College. This course's basic pedagogical agenda is in its integration of Jewish and Palestinian undergraduate students, and in the joint instruction of a Palestinian faculty member and a Jewish faculty member. It is the only setting for the joint learning of Jewish and Palestinian students at the College.

Student activism in the course is conducted through civil society organizations committed to social justice and human rights – either organizations in the informal education field, or social change organizations that in addition to their other activities implement a significant informal educational program. Some students are active in public institutions and social service settings, and their engagement focuses on informal education for social justice. The engagement provides students with an empowering experience of civic activism and includes activities such as: workshops for children and youth in underprivileged Palestinian and Jewish communities in the social periphery (including immigrant communities); work with youth at risk in boarding schools and shelters; guidance of children with special needs and disabilities; teaching in shelters for battered women; training of migrant workers and refugees; and facilitation of workshops for gay and lesbian youth.

The course discusses informal education as a bypass of the formal education system, and analyzes the activities of informal educational organizations, including pedagogical, administrative and ideological characteristics of the field. The theoretical learning in the course includes the examination of concepts such as: civil society, third sector and social movements; discourse of citizenship in Israel (including post-colonialist and feminist perspectives); social change, ethics and education; critical pedagogy and liberating pedagogy. The course provides historical background to the development of informal education, including the social, cultural, economic and political conditions in which it grew.

Education for Social Justice, Environmental Justice and Peace

Haggith Gor Ziv, Galia Zalmansson-Levi and Gal Harmat
Kibbutzim College of Education, Tel-Aviv

This teachers' training program of four years aims at building students' capacity to educate children toward social justice and peace, raising students' awareness to gender inequalities, environmental justice, and other forms of discrimination. Students' field training integrates engagement in organizations for social change, as well as in schools located at disadvantaged neighborhoods. ***Being a four year program, it allows for a long-term process of change among students, as well as among partner organizations and schools.***

The program combines both theoretical learning of critical pedagogy and critical social theory, and practical training for infusing activism in informal and formal education settings. It is based on principles of feminist critical pedagogy, and discusses concepts such as dialogue, empowerment, knowledge production, power relations, etc. Courses in the program address Israeli society, human rights, children's rights, gender equality, critical social theory, social movements, and more. These concepts and theories provide framing for the students' engagement in the field. Examples of the frameworks through which students in the program are active: social change organizations working with children of migrant workers and refugees, youth hostels and boarding schools for youth at risk, community organizations working in Jewish and Palestinian underprivileged neighborhoods, and organizations addressing the rights and well-being of children with physical disabilities.

The program capitalizes on student diversity, proactively recruiting students from backgrounds reflecting the various segments of Israeli society and providing an unparalleled space for intergroup dialogue of Palestinians and Jews, migrant workers, students with disabilities, immigrants and native born, from the center and periphery of Israeli society. This truly multi-cultural encounter is central to the program, and a fundamental element that exposes participants to other social groups, and serves as a basis for experiencing and practicing changes in power relations (on the group level and on the inter-personal level). This means that the diverse class context is employed as a source of knowledge and as a setting for the production of knowledge. Discussions in class directly relate to the power relations between the social groups in class, and attempts are actively made to change these power relations and to achieve equality within the program. In this manner, the program teaches students to analyze power relations and advance more just practices in other settings. The fact that the program lasts four years, and so does the relationships formed with and between the students, reinforces the power of the heterogeneous group.

Education With a View Towards the Community

Dr. Tamar Hagar, Adv. Yael Efron, Tufaha Saba and Nava Shay

[Department of Education](#)

Tel-Hai Academic College, Tel-Hai

Students participating in the program take four courses – "Critical Thought, Gender and Social Activism", "Human Rights, Leadership and Change", "Jewish-Arab Dialogue: Action Research" and "Engagement in the Community" – during the two years of the program. These courses complete one another in forming a program that encourages students to critically observe the complex social reality and to identify situations of oppression and inequality, and empowers them to cope with such situations and act as agents of social and educational change. The program exposes students to critical theories in a far-reaching manner in the fields of education, civil society, and human rights, and thoroughly discusses the practices and tools for change that these theories have proposed. This includes the ideas and concepts of critical pedagogy, multiculturalism, feminism, globalization, and more. It provides the means for critically interpreting social reality from various perspectives. It perceives effective social action as dependent upon one's ability to identify power relations and structures of domination, and to question the motivations and interests behind specific social and educational actions.

Most students participating in the program are already engaged as part of their studies in field placements, which are usually of a therapeutic nature. Thus their involvement in this program allows for a different kind of engagement: a broader perspective, viewing the children that they

work with and themselves within a larger social structure, and learn to understand the children's problems not as individual, personal problems, but as social and political ones.

Several schools and community organizations in the northern Galilee are chosen each year by the program's staff as the frameworks for student social engagement. These have included organizations working with underprivileged Jewish and Palestinian communities, with youth at risk, with victims of sexual assault, and with children with special needs, among other target groups.

At the beginning of the year students choose the school or organization that interests them, and spend the initial period of their engagement as participant observers – studying the organizations, mapping their structure, activities, strategies, and identifying needs. They then propose an activity or small scale project that will attempt to answer the needs that they have identified. Students begin to implement the projects during the second semester, and continue them in the following academic year. Projects in the past have included: mentoring and program development at an organization that works with youth in disempowered neighborhoods; guidance and teaching of Palestinian high school students who participate in a preparatory program at the College; guidance of an economic empowerment program for women at an organization that advances social rights in the community; and initiation and development of venues for Jewish and Palestinian students on campus.

The program is open to all students of the College, although the majority of participants have been students from the Department of Education. As it addresses issues of multiculturalism and minority rights, and emphasizes Palestinian-Jewish dialogue, it draws both Jewish and Palestinian students to participate. The program's staff includes two Jewish faculty members, a Palestinian faculty member, and a Jewish coordinator.

4 / CENTER AND PERIPHERY



Leadership and Social Change

Dr. Ariela Bairey Ben Ishay and Moti Gigi

[Department of Administration and Public Policy](#)

Sapir Academic College, Sderot

This course aims to develop students' personal awareness, social consciousness, and belief in the possibility of change. It is shaped to motivate students to take action to diminish situations of oppression in their everyday lives, teaching them to identify such situations, and discussing effective strategies and skills for initiating change. One of the program's underlying principles is that substantive, empowering and transformative learning takes place when theoretical knowledge and personal experience are integrated. It thus uses such integration to develop students' critical consciousness – continuously linking theories of inequality and difference with students' own biographies and everyday lives. Another underlying principle of the program is the combination of sociology and psychology, stressing both the social reality/social context and the personal emotional process inherent in everyday practice and in action for change.

The first part, titled "Coping with Diversity in the Workplace" addresses issues of social difference, heterogeneity and inequality, and how they come to be expressed in everyday situations in the workplace. It asks students to examine their reactions to situations of inequality and unbalanced power relations, and discusses various ways of action (on the personal and/or collective level) to reduce oppression and exploitation. The second part, "Leadership for Change" investigates what constitutes acts of leadership, stressing that leadership is composed of individual social and political acts.

Students participating in the program tend to form a particularly diverse group, encompassing Jewish and Palestinian students of different ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, and of different ages. The peripheral location of Sapir Academic College, the specific program of the Department of Administration and Public Policy, and the fact that the course sessions are held on Friday (which is not a workday in Israel) tend to attract this diversity – especially a greater number of Arab Bedouins from the Negev, and older Jews of Mizrahi (oriental) origin who are working class mid-career students with some significant professional experience.

Students act individually, for the most part, to implement within their regular circles and institutions (workplace, college, neighborhood, etc.) a process that will lead to change – change in a situation of inequality and exploitation that they have identified. Many of the students work in public service institutions (health maintenance organizations, national insurance institute, ministry of internal affairs, etc.), and therefore their projects may impact policy or the rights of a specific group. The project of advancing change within students' workplace was based on the principle of linking theoretical knowledge with personal experience. In class time is allotted for reflection upon the problems that emerge in the process of planning change – how to deal with resistance and threats, how to overcome fear, the language appropriate when approaching co-workers and superiors, etc. Student projects have included: the advancement of just working conditions for cashiers in a neighborhood supermarket; initiating of a socially-oriented radio program at the local radio station in Ofakim (a development town in the Negev); increasing awareness to women's rights and sexual abuse through workshops in the workplace.

The course is co-taught by a female faculty member of Ashkenazi origin, and a male faculty member of Mizrahi origin who grew up in Sderot (the peripheral town in the Negev at which Sapir Academic College is located). They stress their role in advancing the process of change among students through leveraging the differences between them and modeling a relationship that attempts to balance power relations between them as colleagues with distinctive backgrounds and experience. Class sessions alternate from academic lecture

presentations to small group discussions and large circle facilitation – as a method of incorporating emotional reflection and processing, and of shaping an alternative discourse in class.

Image and Reality: Visual Dialogue in Palestinian East Jerusalem

Miki Kratsman and Chen Shapira

[Department of Photography](#)

Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem

The course's main objective is to spur among art students awareness and critical understanding of the human, social and political reality that surrounds them. It seeks to provide students with skills and tools for interpreting and acting in the public sphere, expanding the perceived role of the artist and of art itself, and broadening the concept of art and photography as a discourse. The course raises questions relating to human rights and place, and questions relating to art in the social, political and human context. It is distinctive as an art course in its alternative pedagogy of learning and creating art in the community, bringing students to the socio-political field and attempting to develop a dialogue with the other based on equality and sincerity.

Participants in the course are third year undergraduate students from all departments. Their engagement in the course focuses on researching and documenting the stories of residents of the neighboring Arab-Palestinian communities, and through this process they attempt to form a visual dialogue with them. Students collect stories, oral and visual testimonies through their meetings with the residents, mapping the place and the community. They meet on an ongoing basis with the families, photographing them and photographing the neighborhood with them, forming a portrait of each family and of the entire community. Through meetings with the residents, and additional means of documentation and observation, students map the neighborhood's memories and narratives, examining the manner in which group and individual narratives are constructed, and how they may change and influence the public sphere. The visual dialogue with the residents is shaped by students' sharing of materials with the residents, and allowing the residents to photograph their own community by providing them with disposable cameras.

The theoretical learning in the course includes: background in the creation of art in social contexts (models of socio-political action through art, and processes of planning, initiation, decision making and management of art projects within a specific community context), relations of art and public space, and art and education (educational meanings of artistic action). In class, concepts such as social justice, equality, human rights, discourse and field, society, community, culture, education and art are continuously analyzed.

The dilemmas guiding the course are numerous and complex. Ethical, educational and political dilemmas guide the work from the beginning. During the process questions of identity, commitment and belonging come up – emerging from the presence of the students from Bezalel, an Israeli academic institution, in Sheikh Jarrah, a Palestinian neighborhood in a conflict zone.

5 / PLANNING WITH THE COMMUNITY



The Unit for (In)Formal Architecture Studies

Arch. Senan Abdelqader and Arch. Liat Brix Etgar

[Department of Architecture](#)

Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Jerusalem

This course aims at training future architects who are aware of the existence and complexities of informal architecture, as a phenomenon typical of marginalized populations. The course facilitates a dialogue between architectural students and residents of Arab Al-Sawahre, a neighborhood in East Jerusalem, through which students attempt to create architectural plans that are meaningful in relation to the cultural and social intricacy of the existing constructed landscape. ***Through a critical examination of the current planning policy and its limitations, the course attempts to propose planning tools that are based on local social and cultural conventions combined with the professional-architectural tools they learn throughout their studies at Bezalel. In other words, the course aims to educate students to become aware of and attend to local knowledge, and address the special needs of the residents and their connection to the wider urban space and formal urban system. In this manner it asks to change the thinking in relation to planning policy in Israel and create an alternative to the traditional training of architects that exists in faculties of architecture in Israel.***

Students' community engagement is conducted through a project taken on by the course, and not within the framework of civil society organizations. They guide a group of residents of Arab Al-Sawahre that has begun to plan a specific area in the neighborhood as part of the municipal planning process. This is in coordination with Abdelqader Architects office, headed by one of the faculty members, that has been authorized by the Municipality of Jerusalem to plan the area. Most neighborhoods of East Jerusalem have not been formally planned – one of the reasons that has given rise to informal construction in East Jerusalem. Students' work with the residents aims to observe, safeguard and map the informal construction in the respective area, considering its physical, social and cultural aspects. It is sought that from their dialogue with the residents will emerge meaningful architectural plans that relate to the social and cultural complexities of the area. Through their meetings in the field students gather information about the place, residents, and their needs, and learn about the living conditions of the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem – about the lack of infrastructure and services, shortage of housing, and harsh poverty.

In this process the course links between academic work and professional work, widening the conventional planning process, and attempting to create a process that is differs from the usual public participation in planning process. It includes both the owners of the lands that border the area to be planned and those who use the area. The involvement of academia in this project allows to form direct contact between the residents, students, planning professionals, representatives of the state's planning institutions and municipal authorities. It seeks to provide opportunities for the residents to directly express their concerns and therefore to bring the representatives of the relevant authorities to become more aware of the residents' problems and needs. Through this process of dialogue and work with the residents a local civic power may be created.

The course is taught by a Jewish female architect and by a Palestinian male architect who directs the architects office with which the project is coordinated. The teaching of two instructors from distinctive backgrounds creates a classroom in which there is no one dominant voice or sole source of knowledge and authority. This, together with the process of work with the residents of Arab Al-Sawahre acts to undermine the traditional relations between faculty members and students. The theoretical part of the course includes the following issues and problems: the phenomenon of informal architecture and its impact on the landscape; critical examination of the outputs of informal architecture; the manner in which informal construction expresses the

relations between the powerful and the disempowered; questions of partnerships and their feasibility, and how to create mechanisms that allow continuous communications between the residents and the course staff and students; academic and professional language and making it accessible to the residents; and understanding of the conditions of planning in Israel as the product of political and not only professional conditions/processes.

[Planning With the Community: Concepts, Tools and Strategies for Action](#)

Prof. Rachel Kallus and Dr. Emily Silverman

[Department of Architecture and Town Planning](#)

Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa

This course aims to change conventional thinking about planning, and to transform the profession itself and the way in which it is envisaged. It promotes a critical view of the role of the planning system and the planner in advancing equality and justice, and presents planning with the community as a tool for social change on the premise that planning is a framework for social action that has significant impact upon communities – their identities, ways of life, mobility, etc. Further, it views planning as a means for mediating between the environment and members of disadvantaged communities, and as such, as a means for coping with social inequality. The course provides students with skills and experience in planning with the community through work with residents of underprivileged communities and social change organizations. It exposes students to the versatile professional activities of planners that work with the community and acts to change the meaning of what constitutes a professional planner.

Students are engaged (as teams) throughout the course with local social change organizations, local social service centers, or community activists. The projects are structured to empower underprivileged neighborhoods in Haifa, and to enhance the work of the community organizations working within those neighborhoods, on projects which link planning and civil, social, cultural, minority, and environmental rights. Students work directly with the residents, developing planning projects for improving public space, advancing affordable housing, etc. They are usually asked to work with residents of communities that are different from them – nationally, ethnically, and culturally. Students' engagement involves a research process in which they analyze documents, interview residents, and meet with relevant stakeholders, planners, and representatives of the municipality or of other government bodies. Project briefs are assembled, and the planning projects are presented to the residents and organizations at the end of the year, with the aim that they become actualized and benefit the communities.

Students participating in the course are undergraduate and graduate students from different departments at the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning (including architecture, planning, landscape architecture and civil engineering). The course addresses issues of: progressive social planning, effective coping with inequality and advancing underprivileged neighborhoods, planning with social change organizations, necessary tools for planners and architects to act for change, community planning as opposed to institutional planning, planning processes that enable work with the community. Throughout the course case studies are examined as a framework for cooperating with the residents, for improving their life conditions and rights. Discussion of power relations is also maintained throughout the course – between students and the communities with which they work, between themselves and professional planning frameworks, and between themselves and academia. A range of methods are used for involving students in different levels of knowledge, tools, emotions and experience. For example, story-telling is a central key in working with the community, interviewing, journal keeping and more.

As it engages with communities and organizations in Haifa, an important metropolis with a diverse population, students obtain an overview of the entire city plan, and become acquainted with current development programs and specific problems of disadvantaged neighborhoods. Consequently, the course gathers and creates substantive knowledge of Haifa as its field of action.

Planning, Sustainability and Human Rights: Theory and Practice – the Right to Adequate Housing in Jaffa Gimel

Prof. Tovi Fenster and Tal Kulka

[Department of Geography and the Human Environment](#)

Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv

This course is part of an interdisciplinary program conducted in partnership with the Legal Clinical Education Center at the Faculty of Law and with the Faculty of Management, with the participation of graduate students of geography, and undergraduate and graduate students of law and management. It provides theoretical knowledge and practical training in planning and development with and for communities, and examines the relations between planning, the law, and financing, from a human rights perspective. ***The link between human rights and planning in the course is constituted by a focus on the right to housing and the right to public participation in planning. It asks to formulate methodologies for work with communities in the field, for the purpose of defining spatial and social needs and their implementation in planning processes. Further, it seeks to formulate a framework for theoretical and practical thinking that integrates knowledge from the field (of a specific community) and the professional knowledge of planners, lawyers and economists.***

On the practical level, the course incorporates: the application of bottom-up planning models in partnership with the community; the advancement of affordable housing and urban renewal projects; work with the municipality, residents and private entrepreneurs; and action for practical and strategic change – change in the everyday lives and in-depth change in power relations. The projects in which students are engaged as part of the course have been developed in response to needs identified in the field, often through the appeals of residents to the Housing, Community and Law Clinic (the corresponding course at the Faculty of Law). The projects integrate, by definition, knowledge from all three fields of knowledge involved in the program – planning, law and financing. Students work in the community in mixed, interdisciplinary teams, each guided by a clinical advisor.

Several projects with disempowered communities have been implemented or are in different stages of implementation. One such project involved work with Jewish residents in a poor neighborhood in Jaffa Gimel in finding a solution for a block of buildings that was required to undergo renovation at cost to the residents. Students helped find a solution that involved the creation of a partnership with a private entrepreneur, and transforming the renovation project into a project that would be profitable, building two additional stories that would serve as student dormitories. A second project in Jaffa involved work with Palestinian residents in a public housing project to improve the physical and social space, relating to the residents' problems in a holistic manner. A third project involved the representation of Jewish residents at a site of urban renewal plan in Bat Yam, aiming to protect their interests and prevent their evacuation as buildings are renovated or demolished. Through these projects the program encourages the formation of local representation – it encourages residents to become more active and take initiative. The program thus seeks to change the power relations between the actors in the field, and proposes a new model for urban renewal that positions underprivileged communities at the center.

In the ongoing class analysis of the projects, students are exposed to the principle dilemmas and problems from the legal, planning, and management/business perspectives, and further they learn to communicate with faculty and students from other professional disciplines. This interdisciplinary character shapes the course's panoramic nature, as it includes short sections of many fields of knowledge, each discussed shortly and on the surface. The course does provide practical knowledge that is considered a part of the professional training in the area of community planning. The theoretical issues reviewed in class include: the historical development of planning from the 19th century, focusing on changes in thinking about planning – from the physical to the critical-social emphasis; the connection of human rights and planning through the issue of the right to housing and public participation; planning and identities (gender, culture and ethnic); sustainability and its expressions in spatial planning; from human rights to planning rights – changes in thinking about planning and work with communities; discussion of urban renewal from the perspective of the three disciplines; public and affordable housing and practices and mechanisms of spatial exclusion.