

TIMELINE

AN ISRAELI SUCCESS STORY MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

1970 Yigal Alon, Minister of Education and Deputy Prime Minister, urges establishment of an open university in Israel, with the goal of making higher education available throughout Israel, for all Israelis.

1971 Yad HaNadiv (The Rothschild Foundation) establishes a Committee of Experts to conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of a "university for all." In 1972, the committee recommends the founding of an open university based on the British model.

1974 On April 14, the Open University of Israel (OUI) officially opens its doors. The first course development team is formed. The OUI aims to distinguish itself from other universities by its open admissions policy, distance learning framework, and nationwide network of study centers.

1976 On October 17, the first semester opens with 2,267 students, and with Mr. Max Rowe, Director of the Rothschild Foundation, at the helm as the first president of the OUI.

1980 – 1988 On June 18, 1980, the Council for Higher Education (CHE) authorizes the OUI to grant BA degrees, which are first awarded on September 6, 1982 to a group of 41 graduates.

By 1988, enrollment at the OUI has risen to 11,000 students registered in 180 courses offered.

1993 – 1995 In order to address the wide range of academic requirements of an ever-growing and diversifying student population, the OUI adopts a sophisticated method of instruction based on the newest technologies: mediated communication, cable TV, and satellite communication.

Course development begins for the Jewish Studies and Israel Studies program in Russian (**Project Russia**) with a view to expanding distance learning in the FSU.

The OUI Publishing House experiences a huge upswing. In 1994, the number of volumes produced for students and the general public reaches 114,000 (61 titles).

Other new developments include the opening of the **Student Call Center** and **Shoham, The Center for Technology in Distance Education**.

In 1995, the first OUI master's degree program is approved by the CHE, and the Open University offers a M.Sc. in Computer Science.



1997 – 2000

The Research Authority is established.

A joint program with the Technion is implemented, whereby students who take a certain number of courses over one year, and earn high grades may then transfer to the Technion. This is the precursor to the successful **Bridges to Other Universities** program, which is initiated in 1999 and allows students to transfer directly into their second year at other universities upon fulfilling course and grade requirements.

2001 – 2005

The University continues to add to its growing list of undergraduate and graduate programs, including an MBA and a B.Sc. in Industrial Engineering and Management.

The University works together with the IDF to allow young adults to study in the **"Atudah"** program towards a bachelor's degree in Computer Science, prior to enlistment.

In 2004, the OUI administrative headquarters and major facilities move to their new location on the Dorothy de Rothschild Campus in Ra'anana.

2006 – 2010

The OUI celebrates thirty years since its establishment. It continues to add study programs to its academic offerings, including a four-year program in software engineering.

Project Pe'er makes distance learning accessible via course books uploaded to the Internet.

The first annual **Research Day** is held, as well as the first **Students Day**, followed by the establishment of the Student Union.

A "Green Council" is launched to provide a backdrop for environmentally-friendly activities sponsored by the OUI.

2011 – 2012

Three research centers are inaugurated:

- **Research Institute for Policy, Political Economy and Society**
- **Research Center for Innovation in Learning Technologies**
- **Center for the Study of Relations between Jews, Christians, and Muslims**

The **Soft Landing** program is initiated to encourage students lacking fluent Hebrew to study at the OUI by providing support services in Arabic. This provides the infrastructure for **Project 100**, a new initiative distinguished by employment-oriented career tracks with a **Bridges to Other Universities** component.

A project is designed offering engineering classes in ultra-Orthodox population centers.

The Budgeting and Finance Committee approves a budgeting model designed specifically to meet the needs of OUI's distinctive academic framework. The budgeting model recognizes the OUI's unique contributions to higher education in Israel, through its widely-used textbooks and its emphasis on accessibility for students who might otherwise not seek higher education.

More than 48,000 students a year and over 42,000 graduates have played a vital role in designing the social fabric of Israel, favorably affecting the earning power of individuals and the national economy.

