Matanel Summer Tracks for Outstanding Students from the Periphery

Summary report
Summer Program 2015

Tel Aviv Youth University

Discovering the human capital of Israel
Students at a class

Students during empowerment activity
Hagit Sahalo (Ashkelon), Adi Vaknin (Hosen) and Yakir Maduri (kiryat Ekron) at the graduation ceremony

All the graduating students of summer 2015
The academic component

Each Youth University student chooses to participate in two of the academic courses on offer in the program. The list of courses includes 2 - 4 credit introductory courses dealing with a wide range of issues in the different disciplines of social sciences and the humanities. This year, the students were offered the following courses: Introduction to statistics, introduction to psychology, developmental psychology, introduction to political thought, and introduction to logic.

During their academic studies in the program, the Summer Youth University students enjoy the same learning experience as regular students at Tel Aviv University. They also meet all the course requirements, the reading list and other assignments, as well as passing an exam or final project.

In addition to the lessons and exercises of the different academic courses offered in the framework of the program, Summer Youth University students participate in a variety of academic frameworks offered by the Unit for Science Oriented Youth. These frameworks are suited to the special requirements of high school students wanting to make the less-than-easy transition to studying in the academic arena, and are aimed at giving participants in the program basic university student tools and learning skills.

Below is a list of the different academic frameworks in which Summer Youth University students participate during the program, in which they acquire the habits, tools and skills detailed above:

- **Reinforcement** - a 90 minute study unit accompanying the different academic courses in which the students participate, throughout the program. The unit is taught by a veteran student studying for a recognized academic degree (bachelor's or master's) in the discipline in which the academic course is offered. In this framework, the participants process the contents of the lessons and exercises by means of active teaching methods (such as: extracting problematic issues that have arisen in the course of the lesson / exercise from the students, independent working in groups, rounds of feedback, mental processing of the material by means of tables / diagrams, discussion of the material through examples from literature and the media, and so on). In this process, the participants acquire various different academic habits, tools and skills to suit the specific requirements of each course, which help them to succeed in meeting the demands (for example: in courses for which there are closed exams, participants are taught skills relating to solving multiple choice questions, while in courses with open exams and/or papers, they are taught various writing skills).
Additional basic skills put across in the reinforcement framework: Summarizing lecturers, quick and in-depth reading of academic sources, summarizing academic source material in Hebrew or English, time management in the course of the semester, peer learning, academic writing (basic rules, style, form, making a comparison, establishing a case theory), organizing for the exam period, methods of processing and learning material for an open (mass answer) or closed (multiple choice) academic exam, and so on.

- **Reading group** - a 90 minute study unit accompanying the different academic courses in which the students participate throughout the program. The unit is taught by a veteran student studying for a recognized academic degree (bachelor's or master's) in the discipline in which the academic course to which the reading group applies is offered. In the reading group, participants read the academic material accompanying the specific course they are studying together, and process it together through peer learning, guided by the veteran student leading the group.

- **English reading group** - a 90 minute study unit given by an expert in the field (Dr. Orly Aidan). In the framework of the reading group, the participants read academic texts in English together, under the guidance of the expert, and learn how to deal with study material in a foreign language (which is not their mother tongue).

- **Research Workshop and academic writing** - a 90 minute study unit. The course provides students with basic research tools and skills for reading and academic writing. Emphasis was put on aspects of academic research practices, including critical analysis of sources: primary sources and secondary sources.

- **Workshops** - in the course of the program, the students participate in a number of study workshops in which they practice basic academic skills such as: time management in the course of the semester, organizing for the exam periods, and methods of processing and learning the material for an open or closed academic exam. These workshops are given by the team of social counselors and the program coordinator.

- **Marathons** - concentrated study days ahead of exams / final projects (two or three days), adapted to the specific content and requirements of the different academic courses in which the students are participating during the program. In these concentrated days, the students learn how to organize and process the material in preparation for the exam / final project, and practice different ways of learning, by means of active teaching methods led by the tutor of the specific course for which they are going to be assessed.

- **The skill of standing in front of an audience, rhetoric** - in the current session, the students joined a course teaching rhetoric skills. In the course, the students participated in
debates, learned how to build an argument, held discussions, and as a final project, prepared a 10 minute presentation on one of their fields of interest.

**Lectures and workshops**
In the framework of the social program, the students took part in a number of enrichment lectures and workshops, such as:

- Innovation – a lecture by Lionel Mitelpunkt, an activist and entrepreneur in education and media.
- "And here are the News" – a lecture by Eran Soroka, an Israeli journalist, the head of the news dept of Nana10 station.
- The history of the refugees and asylum seekers in Israel - a visit to South of Tel Aviv, at the "new central station" and afterwards a meeting and discussion with Prof. Gideon Kunda
- An enrichment lecture by Thomas Goodman, on physical magic show.
- A lecture and planet observation by Jacob Fireman.

**Scholastic achievements**

**Table of scholastic achievements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course name</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to political thought</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to psychology</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to logic</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to sociology</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistics and data analysis</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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</tbody>
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**The social and cultural component**
We see the time that the students spend at Tel Aviv University as an opportunity to expose them to various different social and cultural aspects. For many of them, this is their first time in Tel Aviv and therefore an additional, important purpose of the program is to introduce
them to the cultural institutions and lively life of the city. Some of the activities are at the initiative of the children themselves.

**Below are the activities enjoyed by the 15th session of Summer University students:**

- A guided tour at the picturesque Neve Tzedek neighborhood.
- A Beit Lessin play: "Ella Grossman". Every year we go together to see a play at Beit Lessin, and every year the students amaze us; their behavior during the show was exemplary and they enjoyed the play very much. The Following morning, the main counselors had a theater workshop during which they analyzed the play with the students.
- A visit to the Sarona compound and guided observation of a movie about the graffiti artist "Banksy does New York."
- An opera performance: as part of the International Workshop at the Israeli Conservatory of Music the students watched an opera show of musicals.
- Meet Tel Aviv - In order to be exposed to the different colors of Tel Aviv city, we took the students to a night-out at Tel Aviv. The students were divided into groups of five and were given various tasks in different locations of Tel Aviv. As part of these 'missions', students were asked to bargain in the Carmel market, to perform 'a street show' at Habima, to answer riddles and to reach specific destination using cryptographic puzzles.
- Parents' night - Every year, at the midst of the program, students' parents were invited to a parents' night. During this evening, student received TAU student cards and presented to their parent a taste of their academic course. The purpose of these meetings is of course to inform and connect the parents to the program.

**Other activities:** Introductory meeting on the first evening, Kabbalat Shabbat and social evenings organized by the students, sports, preparatory meeting prior to going home, and a moving graduation party at the Green Village.

At the same time, there were two other social frameworks:

1. **The "mamma groups"** - the general group of students was divided into 3 "mother groups". These groups were called "mamma groups". Each group had a social counselor and two youth counselors. The groups met once a week, on Sundays, in a warm and open atmosphere, for group activities. The name "mamma groups" gave the students a strong
connection with the counselors, a feeling that the counselors were parental figures, or big brothers.

At the beginning of the summer, they dealt with introductory activities, teambuilding and breaking the ice. Later on, these meetings were used for expressing emotions and feelings, as well as a platform for in-depth discussions on cultural gaps, current affairs, and many other issues. The meetings of the "mamma groups" were a great success.

1. **Projects:** The three social counselors chose a field from their personal world (details below) and gave a process-based workshop taking place once a week, the main objective of the project being to serve as a leisure and enrichment framework in a non-academic field. In addition, the students enjoyed exposure to a different field, from the personal world of their counselors. This summer there were two projects: 1) Relaxation and Meditation Workshop, 2) Young reporters.

**Invitation to the opening and closing ceremonies**