

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program: *Matanel Fellows at Alma*
Year: 2019

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program: Matanel Fellows at Alma

Year of activity: 2019

Name of the report's writer: Eyal Biton

Function of the report's writer: Chief Operating Officer

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Number of active participants in the program:

In the first semester of 2019, there were 21 students; in the summer 2019 semester there were 25 students; in the first semester of the 2019-2020 academic year, there are 22 students. A number of participants attended two consecutive semesters – the maximum allowable by the project.

Estimated number of impacted participants:

All the students were impacted by the program; they in turn impact on a countless number: there is at least a multiple of 10 in the number of people who are immediately impacted by the program students – their family members and close friends. In the longer term, and on a wider perspective, each student, through their artistic, cultural, educational and civic society activism, impacts on hundreds, even thousands.

Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

The first semester of 2019 began in early March and ran through to June; the summer semester ran from June – August; the first semester of the 2019-2020 academic year started in October 2019, and finished at the end of January 2020. The second semester of the current year is due to start in mid-March; there are close to 40 applicants, and they are currently being interviewed. The maximum number that will be accepted into the program is 25.

The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

Over the three semesters that ran in totality or in part in 2019, there were 68 students. The spring and autumn semesters each consisted of two weekly 5-6 hour long meetings that contained five series of 75-90 minute lectures, combined with one extensive, 2.5-3 hour Beit Midrash session of peer learning in small groups. The summer semester had a different structure: it was shorter, had a heightened arts focus and consisted of lecture series without the Beit Midrash component.

Spring semester 2019: lecture series

- Beit Midrash – Makot Talmud tractate: public responsibility; urban space; asylum seekers. Dr. Yair Lifshitz and Gal Elnir
- Lecture series:
 - Philosophy, secularization and heresy. Dr. Jeremy Fogel
 - The roots of Israeliness. Dr. Yair Assouline and guest speakers
 - Talmud. Dr. Yakov Meir
 - Group study. Dr. Ruth Calderon
 - Book of *Zohar*. Dr. Netta Zohar

Summer semester 2019: lecture series

- Voice and melody, language and custom: Arabic in Hebrew culture. Yair Kokhav
- A midsummer night's dream – exploration of Shakespeare's comedies. Dr. Yair Lifshitz
- Bread from Heaven: food in the Bible. Dina Ventura
- Poetry of Hayim Nahman Bialik. Zali Gurevich
- Songs and lessons: tips from the Sages to modern popular song writers. Ariel Horowitz
- In the essence of the words: reading and movement in cautionary tales. Dr. Netta Sobol

Autumn semester 2019-2020

- Beit Midrash – Dr. Yakov Meir and Neria Shapira
- Lecture series:
 - Tradition and modernity. Streams and movements in modern Jewish society. Prof. Emanuel Etkes
 - Peer learning. Gal Elnir
 - The sins of Baruch Spinoza and Zhuang Zhou. Dr. Jeremy Fogel
 - Israeli philosophy. Prof. Sami Shalom Shitrit
 - Gender aspects of prophecies. Tomer Ventura

The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

At the conclusion of each semester, the students fill in a feedback and satisfaction survey that seeks to provide Alma with information about the quality and impact of the program.

There are two parts to the questionnaire: quantitative evaluation of every study course, and qualitative evaluation through the students writing comments on the study program, the individual lecturers, and suggestions for improvement.

The quantitative component of the evaluation examines the quality of the lecturers and the contents of the lecture series, and is gauged through 8 aspects. The students are asked to give a grade from 0 – 5, with 5 being the highest, on each aspect:

- Was the study program interesting?
- Was the study program well constructed and the material presented in a clear way?
- Did the course present issues for discussion and debate?
- Was the length of the study program suitable for the topic of the course?
- Did the discussion in the class contribute to understanding and study on issues beyond the topic of the course itself?
- Did the lecturer create a pleasant atmosphere?
- Did the lecturer allow for discussion and disagreement?
- Was the course relevant and meaningful for you?

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:
As noted, interviews of candidates for the second 2020 semester are already taking place, and the level of interest is high.

Based on the comments and suggestions of the participants in the first two semesters of 2019, the following issues must be considered:

- Sending material between sessions for the students to read in advance of the next session;
- Expanding the peer-learning in small groups study component;
- Ensure that the Beit Midrash component consistently consists of two educators working in parallel.

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (as **PDF documents**)

Please join photos – as **JPG files** – and any link or any other document connected to the program which will seem to you relevant – as **PDF document**.

Please join a 5 minutes movie which presents your institution and the particular project supported by the Matanel Foundation. The movie should be accessible to the philanthropic world and to other potential donors.

The link to the film on youtube is: <https://youtu.be/9rSUhHdMdhY>