STUDY ABROAD PROPOSAL
Tel Aviv University International
Tel Aviv, Israel

Revision: October 2, 2013
Submitted by the Program in Jewish Studies
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The Program in Jewish Studies proposes the addition of a direct-credit study abroad program in Israel at Tel Aviv University, through the Tel Aviv University International Program. This document outlines (1) the rationale for such a program given the needs and interests of Vanderbilt students and (2) the academic and cultural benefits of the university in question.

The website for Tel Aviv University International can be found at http://international.tau.ac.il/.

Rationale for Proposal

Vanderbilt used to have a direct credit study abroad option at Tel Aviv University. It was allowed to lapse in the early 2000s due to heightened security concerns at the time of the Second Intifada. We are proposing the reestablishment of this relationship.

In Israel, Vanderbilt currently has a direct credit study abroad program at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. We are also proposing under separate cover the establishment of a direct credit study abroad option in Israel at the University of Haifa.

There is a two-fold rationale for reestablishing a direct credit abroad option at Tel Aviv University alongside the existing option at Hebrew University and the proposed option at Haifa. The first regards responsiveness to student demand. Since 2009, 22 Vanderbilt students have studied abroad in Israel. Half have chosen Hebrew University through our direct credit option. The other half have chosen Tel Aviv University. They made this choice even in the absence of a direct credit option. Tel Aviv University is proving consistently attractive to Vanderbilt students. We hope to smooth the path for students to pursue this option by reestablishing our direct credit relationship with TAU.

The second rationale regards the educational goals of study abroad and how our offerings would represent Israel to our students. We can offer students excellent coverage of the Israeli Jewish experience in its diverse forms if we provide direct credit options at both Hebrew University (in Israel’s religious center) and Tel Aviv University (in Israel’s economic and cultural center). With the University of Haifa, which offers superior Arabic studies and exposure to the Israeli Arab experience, the three options together will provide Vanderbilt undergraduates with choices that represent Israel in its diversity.
Located in Israel’s cultural and economic center, Tel Aviv University is Israel’s largest university. It was created in 1963 out of several pre-existing institutes. It now houses some 30,000 students, 106 departments and 90 research institutes. Tel Aviv University’s international program offers over 30 courses per year in English. Tel Aviv University’s international program has existing relationships with a number of universities, including New York University and Boston University, among others.

Sponsorship and Administration

Jewish Studies is sponsoring this proposal. It can provide guidance and advising to students on course selection, but it will not be involved in selecting and/or approving students for study abroad at Tel Aviv University.

The Global Education Office will be the responsible party at Vanderbilt for approving students to study abroad. GEO will also maintain primary responsibility for monitoring the Tel Aviv University International program. The Jewish Studies program will provide support to GEO, to assist it in its monitoring duties. We have met with Tom Bogenschild of GEO, and he has confirmed GEO’s support for this proposal.

A supporting letter from GEO acknowledging and explaining their role in the administration of this program has been sent by GEO as an addendum to this proposal. GEO’s administration of the TAU program will be similar to the arrangement for GEO’s administration of the Hebrew University program. (For details on application procedure and GEO’s role, see below, “Eligibility, Application and Selection.”)

At Tel Aviv University, student selection and program administration are under the auspices of TAU International (http://international.tau.ac.il/), headed by Dean Neil Gandal and English-language program director Maureen Meyer. Associate Director Tal Eidelman serves as academic advisor to students there. A team of four resident assistants are a first point of contact for students, providing assistance and guidance, and helping students address any problems that might emerge. They are supervised by Jenia Gilgoulin, Head R.A.

Melea Rubinstein, Director of US Admissions for Tel Aviv University International, works out of the university’s Manhattan offices and serves as liaison with partner institutions in the United States. She, along with Ms. Meyer, met with GEO Assistant Director of Operations Isabelle Crist at the NAFSA: Association of International Educators conference in St. Louis in June 2013.

Academics and Requirements

Students at Tel Aviv University’s international program learn Hebrew and take college level courses in English for credit while immersed in Israeli culture. International students may enroll in Tel Aviv University’s semester or yearlong study abroad program through their home school.

Vanderbilt University will grant no more than 18 credits for a semester abroad and requires that students take a minimum of 12 credits. (VU tuition is for 12-18 credits). Students at TAU International typically enroll in five courses (15 credits) each semester. In addition, TAU International requires students to take
an intensive Hebrew language course ("ulpan"), which runs for 7 weeks in the summer prior to the Fall semester and for 4 weeks in the winter prior to the Spring semester. The Fall Hebrew ulpan awards students 6 academic credits upon successful completion. The spring Hebrew ulpan awards 4 academic credits. For all administrative purposes, including tuition payment and credit transfer, the ulpan is considered to be part of the semester abroad (i.e., not a summer program or a "winterim"). Placement into the appropriate ulpan level is determined by a language placement exam administered at Tel Aviv University prior to the start of the language classes. Native Hebrew speakers may request to take an ulpan-exemption test.

A student taking the ulpan and the normal five course load at TAU international would earn 21 TAU credits for the Fall semester (6+15) or 19 for the Spring (4+15). Because of Vanderbilt’s caps on study abroad credit transfers, only 18 of these credits would transfer to Vanderbilt. Students, guided by GEO and their academic advisors, would choose which of the courses to request credit transfer for. This is a similar situation to that which entails for students enrolling at Hebrew University.

All of the courses for international students are taught in English (with the exception of the Hebrew language ulpan). Fluent Hebrew speakers may, with permission, enroll in up to two courses from the university-wide course offerings. Courses are taught by a mix of tenure-line members of the regular TAU faculty as well as faculty with appointments in the International School.

TAU International also offers a special program for pre-med and other health/science students. Sponsored jointly with Assaf Harofeh Medical Center, the program, “A Voyage to Medicine in Israel,” offer a combination of academic courses (Health & Psychology; History of Medicine in the Holy Land; The Circle of Life: From Birth to Old Age; Clinical Laboratory in Medicine; Introduction to Clinical Research; Physiology and Sports Medicine), practical experience in the medical field (a First Aid course with Israel’s Red Cross affiliate, Magen David Adom; a Trauma Life Support course at the Israeli Medical Corps; and volunteering on an ambulance), and experience shadowing members of the clinical research staff at the medical center. The program is conducted in English, and has specialized requirements, and a higher tuition. Details are available at http://international.tau.ac.il/prospective-students/undergraduate-programs/specialized-programs/a-voyage-to-medicine-in-israel.html. A supporting note from the Health Professions Advisory Office, which assists Vanderbilt undergraduate students interested in attending health professions graduate school has been forwarded to Dean Rapisarda under separate cover.

Departments and Courses

Tel Aviv University’s International program offers a variety of courses in the fields of Jewish Studies, Israel Studies, Middle East Studies, Arts, History, Religion, Management and more.

Below is a course list showing the broad range of courses available to international students at Tel Aviv University. Links to course information is available via the Tel Aviv University website. Also available there is information regarding the faculty that will teach each course.

Courses would be deemed eligible for Vanderbilt credit via the standard departmental evaluation process, (i.e., review and approval or rejection by relevant department chair /program director or director of undergraduate studies).
2012-2013 Course List:

• Arabic
  o Introduction to Modern Standard Arabic

• Art Studies
  o Acting Workshop
  o Creative Writing
  o Fictional Film Directing Workshop
  o Introduction to Israeli Art: From The Founding of Bezalel
  o Israeli Cinema and the Culture of Modern Israel
  o Israeli Society Through the Cinematic Lens
  o Music And Society in Israel
  o Screened Ideas: Thinking Through Film And Television

• Humanities
  o Techno Utopia or Cyberspace as American Culture: A Short History of the Digital Condition

• Israel Studies
  o Israeli Politics
  o One Hundred Years: History and Memory in Tel Aviv-Jaffa
  o The Zionist Movement: From a Vision To a State 1870-1967

• Jewish Studies
  o After Auschwitz: Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Culture
  o Contemporary Jewish Issues
  o History of Anti-Semitism
  o Jewish Education The Reality and the Vision
  o Jewish Identity in Israel and the Diaspora
  o Jews on Trial
  o Judaism And Christianity in Conflict
  o Modern Jewish History
  o The Essence of Judaism
  o The Jews and the Passion, From the Gospels to Gibson

• Life Sciences
  o Israel and the Environment

• Management and Economics
  o Business Ethics
  o The Israeli Economy

• Middle East Studies
  o Foreign Policy of the U.S. 1945-1990: The Middle East and the Arab Israeli Conflict
  o Ideologies and Intellectual Movements in the Modern Middle East
  o Introduction to the Religion of Islam
  o Israel and the Middle East
  o Politics, Religion and Terror in the Middle East
  o Radical Islamic Movements
  o The Struggle for Palestine: The Roots of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

• Social Science
Introduction to Anthropology
Introduction to Psychology
Sociology of Religion

Grading

The following is the grading system used at Tel Aviv University’s International program:

- A+ = 97 - 100%
- A = 93 - 96%
- A- = 90 - 92%
- B+ = 87 - 89%
- B = 83 - 86%
- B- = 80 - 82%
- C+ = 77 - 79%
- C = 73 - 76%
- C- = 70 - 72%
- D+ = 67 - 69%
- D = 63 - 66%
- D- = 60 - 62%
- F = 59% and under

Calendar

2013 Fall Semester Undergraduate Programs

Fall/Year Program Group Flight	July 16, 2013
General Orientation & Hebrew Placement July 18, 2013
Summer Ulpan*
Fall Vacation	Sep.09 - Oct. 06, 2013
Fall Semester	Oct. 06 – Dec. 19, 2013
Last day in the dorms*	Dec. 22, 2013
* Fall students only. Year-long students retain their rooms through May.

2014 Spring Semester Undergraduate Programs

* Note: Ulpan is required for study abroad students only (Spring semester)

Spring Program Group Flight	Jan. 13, 2014
Arrival at TAU, Spring	Jan. 14, 2014
General Orientation & Hebrew Placement Jan. 15, 2014
Exam
Winter Ulpan - Hebrew Language Program*
Jan. 20 – Feb. 13, 2014
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Spring Semester
Feb. 16 – May 22, 2014
Passover Vacation
Apr. 8 – Apr. 23, 2014
Memorial Day
May 5, 2014
Independence Day
May 6, 2014
Shavuot Vacation
June 3-4, 2014
Semester Exams
May 18 – May 22, 2014
Last day in dorms
May 25, 2014

Eligibility, Application and Selection

Tel Aviv University’s undergraduate semester- and year-long programs are open to students with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (equivalent to a B or 80%). There is some flexibility around this requirement. Students with lower GPAs are encouraged to apply as the student essay, teacher recommendations and other factors are also taken into consideration.

There is no language proficiency requirement for students whose primary and secondary education took place in the U.S., Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, or New Zealand. All others must demonstrate English-language proficiency validated through a TOEFL test (minimum score: written 582, computer-based 223, or iBT 89) or IELTS test (minimum score: 7).

Vanderbilt’s own standard eligibility requirements as specified by the policies of the Colleges and by the Global Education Office would also be in force, including the requirement that A&S students must complete one year of study at Vanderbilt before being eligible for study abroad. We recommend that Vanderbilt not impose any additional requirements beyond the normal GEO requirements. Please note that Tel Aviv’s required 3.0 minimum cumulative GPA is higher than GEO’s required 2.7 minimum GPA.

Students would apply to Tel Aviv University through GEO, just as they would with any other of the other programs on GEO’s approved list, using the study abroad software used for all other programs. GEO would advise and screen applicants according to established policies and criteria, in collaboration with TAU offices. The details of these procedures would need to be worked out between GEO and TAU. GEO anticipates that it would either transmit information collected in the Study Abroad system for qualified applicants, or assist students in completing additional forms required by TAU. A combination of the two is most likely, and these details will need to be negotiated. This is standard procedure in most direct enroll programs, including with Hebrew University.

TAU requires that applicants submit a personal essay, two letters of recommendation, and official transcripts.
The creation of a direct credit study abroad option at Tel Aviv University would serve a diverse array of students from a variety of majors. Although the Program in Jewish Studies is serving as sponsor of this proposal, this proposal is not intended to primarily serve Jewish Studies majors, nor does experience suggest that it would. Since 2009, 22 Vanderbilt students have studied abroad in Israel, half at Hebrew University through the direct credit option and half at Tel Aviv University in spite of the lack of a direct credit program. Of these 22, only 2 have been Jewish Studies majors. (One of those was a triple History-JS-Psychology major.) 91% of the students studying abroad in Israel since 2009 have not been Jewish Studies majors. Three were majoring in Political Science (one a double major in Psychology), 3 in HOD, 2 in Communication Studies, and one each from BSCI, CE, ECON, FRE, PHIL, RLST, and Viola (Blair). Two had not yet declared.

As is stated on the GEO website, GEO will give approval to study abroad, whereas the partner program provider (here, Tel Aviv University International) will determine final acceptance to the program. The admissions determinations of Tel Aviv University International are based on academic merit and do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The Jewish Studies program will not be involved in the screening or selecting of applicants.

Facilities

All long-term students (semester/year) are housed in newly renovated dormitories located within walking distance from the Tel Aviv University campus. Dormitories are divided into suites of one or two bedrooms shared by two students per bedroom. Each suite is furnished and includes a kitchenette and bathroom, air conditioning and wifi. The university does not supply household items such as blankets, pillows, towels, kitchen utensils and household goods. A self-service laundromat is located directly across from the dorm complex. The dormitories have security guards in the building and require student identification for entry.

There is no inclusive meal plan at Tel Aviv University. Students may cook in their suites. There are several supermarkets nearby, as well as shops that sell prepared foods. University subsidized cafeterias on campus serve meals at reasonable prices. There are many restaurants and cafés in close proximity to campus. Students should plan to spend up to $750 per month for food, independent travel, and incidental expenses.

Mandatory health insurance for all full-time students at Tel Aviv University International is included in the tuition fee. The policy is a basic health insurance plan that covers treatment in Israel by a large selection of private, English-speaking doctors. It also covers hospitalization in public hospitals. The period of coverage includes the ulpan period and all programs and vacation days. This insurance provides coverage for the student only within Israel. Optional health insurance coverage is offered for travel outside Israel for an additional fee.

Tel Aviv University requires that international students carry a cell phone with an Israeli number. This enables the program staff to contact all program participants at any time via SMS text messages or group messaging.
Safety and security

Students and parents can find security and safety information about study abroad locations at the following websites, and, based on the information provided, can make informed decisions about whether to participate in a study abroad program.

GEO travel warnings and alerts:

Information for parents of students planning to study abroad:

Student International Travel Policy:

CIEE, Health and safety:
http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/why-ciee/health-safety/

CIEE, Travel alerts:
http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/alerts/

CET:
http://cetacademicprograms.com/before-departure/safety/

Information about the City and the University

Located in Israel’s cultural and economic center, Tel Aviv University is Israel’s largest university. It was created in 1963 out of several pre-existing institutes. It now houses some 30,000 students, 106 departments and 90 research institutes. As we would expect from a university twice the size of Vanderbilt, it offers a full range of programs and courses across a wide variety of disciplines. The university boasts many distinguished faculty, including some whom Vanderbilt has recruited away, including Vanderbilt’s own Eugene Greener Professor David Wasserstein, a chaired professor in History and Jewish Studies who taught at Tel Aviv University.

The city of Tel Aviv was founded in 1909 with a vision of establishing a modern Hebrew-speaking metropolis. Today, Tel Aviv understands itself as the secular, progressive counterpoint to the religiously and politically conservative Jerusalem. (In American political terms, we might say that Tel Aviv plays blue state to Jerusalem’s red state.) International students who choose Tel Aviv University often choose it over Hebrew University of Jerusalem, not because they are weighing the formal academic programs, but because they are specifically looking for the type of secular, urban experience that Tel Aviv offers and that Jerusalem does not. The choice of city’s factors heavily into student decision-making about where in Israel to study.

Tel Aviv University sits on a beautiful campus located north of the city’s center. Tel Aviv’s museums, restaurants, theaters, concert halls, fashion district, parks and beaches are all just a short bus or taxi ride away.
Orientation

Most US-based students travel together to Israel on a group flight, accompanied by program staff. Chartered buses take the students from the airport to the university, where they participate in an orientation to the study abroad program.

Culture and Immersion

Tel Aviv University International seeks to engage students with Israeli society and culture. The program arranges three excursions for students: one to the southern desert fortress of Masada, one to Jerusalem in the country’s center, and one to the northern part of the country. The trips are also intended to help enhance social cohesion among the students.

International students are considered full members of the broader student body, and are welcome to participate in all regular Tel Aviv University clubs and activities. Events are publicized via posters around campus. A calendar of events is also posted in the International Program offices.
Tuition and Fees

Students would pay full-time Vanderbilt tuition for their period of study abroad; for semester or academic year students this figure will vary according to actions taken by the Board of Trust every May. Such variance will also affect summer term students, although in this case the rate billed will also vary according to the number of academic credits students will take in either university and bring back to Vanderbilt.

Vanderbilt billing may include additional fees to cover local tuition fees that exceed those of Vanderbilt net tuition as calculated by GEO, mandatory housing fees, or other assessments made by TAU. These fees will be set on an annual basis by GEO as they are for all other approved study abroad programs, and billed directly to the student account. As with application procedures, GEO will need to work out the details and specifics of these billing procedures in cooperation with TAU and several business offices here on campus once the programs are approved by the College.

Tel Aviv University’s schedule of fees for its semester and year-long programs is presented below for reference purposes only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Year-long Programs</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>A Voyage To Medicine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>$9,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language (Intensive Hebrew/Arabic)</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$11,450</td>
<td>$18,450</td>
<td>$13,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A non-refundable $60 application fee is not included above.
- Full-time semester tuition includes 5 courses (excluding the mandatory Ulpan). Additional courses taken each semester cost $1,200 per course.
- Trips, Student Activities, Facility Fees and Health Insurance are all included in the tuition fees quoted above.
- A student who loses his/her student card, medical insurance card or room keys will be charged $10 per item.
Appendix: Letter from Health Professions Advisory Office

From: <Baum>, Robert <robert.baum@Vanderbilt.Edu>
Date: Wednesday, April 3, 2013 10:18 AM
To: Shaul Kelner <s.kelner@vanderbilt.edu>
Subject: RE: Study Abroad for Vanderbilt Pre-Med Students

Study Abroad Committee of the College of Arts and Science Committee on Educational Programs:

I think the program proposed by Professor Kelner would have great appeal for a number of Vanderbilt Pre meds. The content appears to be well rounded and could be of benefit to a student’s learning experience and also of value in helping build a strong application to medical school.

Robert Baum

Robert Baum, M.D.
Director, Health Professions Advisory Office
Assistant Professor Orthopedics and Rehabilitation
5 June 2013

Prof. Shaul Kelner
Director, Program in Jewish Studies and
Associate Professor of Sociology
Campus

Dear Shaul,

Thanks for coming by yesterday to discuss the proposal for study abroad programs at Tel Aviv and Haifa Universities. GEO very much supports these initiatives. We believe that the rationale for regularizing our student mobility relationships makes a great deal of sense, for all the reasons you articulate.

The addition of new programs does require a commitment of resources on GEO’s part, and direct-enroll programs of this type are fairly labor intensive in a relative sense. That said, we are eager to develop new options and opportunities for Vanderbilt students abroad. Given the demonstrable interest and support on campus for these two initiatives, coupled with the gracious outreach of faculty and staff from Haifa and Tel Aviv over the past year, we believe that we can develop relationships that will provide good support for these programs.

With regard to the questions you had about the mechanics of direct-enroll programs, I can offer the following responses.

1. Administration of programs. The two programs would be administered precisely as the Hebrew University program is currently, and as all other approved direct enroll programs are handled.
2. Applications to programs. Students would apply to Tel Aviv and Haifa through GEO just as any other of the programs on the GEO list, using the Studio Abroad software used for all other programs: (https://webapp.mi.vanderbilt.edu/studioabroad/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ListAll&Sort=Program_Country&Order=asc&Tab=0).
3. GEO would advise and screen applicants according to established procedures and criteria in collaboration with TAU and HU International offices. Procedural and timing details will be worked out between GEO and TAU/HU staff as needed; we anticipate that a concurrent application system would be required in which GEO would both:
   a. transmit information collected in the Studio Abroad system for qualified applicants
   b. assist students in completing additional forms required by TAU/HU

This is standard procedure in most direct enroll programs.
4. **Tuition and fees.** Students would pay full-time Vanderbilt tuition for their period of study abroad; for semester or academic year students this figure will vary according to actions taken by the Board of Trust every May. Such variance will also affect summer or special term students, although in this case the rate billed will also vary according to the number of academic credits students will take in either university and bring back to Vanderbilt.

Vanderbilt billing may include additional fees to cover local tuition fees that exceed those of Vanderbilt net tuition as calculated by GEO, mandatory housing fees, or other assessments made by TAU/HU. These fees will be set on an annual basis by GEO as they are for all other approved study abroad programs, and billed directly to the student account. As with application procedures, GEO will need to work out the details and specifics of these billing procedures in cooperation with TAU/HU and several business offices here on campus once the programs are approved by the college.

5. **Registration, enrollment and credits.** Students will be bound by all Vanderbilt as well as all TAU or HU academic policies including minimum and maximum credit loads. All approved study abroad students at Vanderbilt must carry a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 18 units while studying abroad. Credit loads at TAU and HU will likely fall within these parameters. Variances from these policies and norms will be addressed by petition to the relevant dean, in coordination with GEO if there are fiscal implications involved.

Remote pre-registration will likely be requested by both universities, although final registration and formal enrollment procedures will take place on the remote campuses once students arrive. Credits and course assessments for all TAU/HU courses will be made by the appropriate Vanderbilt department through GEO’s automated course assessment system (https://webapp.mis.vanderbilt.edu/studioabroad/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=1B29A57E-9EFD-07DC-CB77362D76A19D55&Link_ID=D9D0A705-07C6-4CA3-2AE838FCDC41A39F&plID=3&IID=29)

Over time, approved course listings will accrue on the GEO program site.

We stand ready to assist in getting these programs on the books once approved, working with our new partner institutions, and training staff to attract and advise students who might benefit from these new links.

Best regards,

Tom Bogenschield
Director, Global Education Office
To: A&S Faculty Council
From: Prasad Polavarapu, Chair, Committee on Educational Programs (CEP)
Ref: Study abroad programs-Tel Aviv and Haifa

The CEP met on September 24, 2013 to discuss the proposal submitted by Professor Shaul Kelner, Associate Professor of Sociology and Jewish Studies, for study abroad programs in Tel Aviv and Haifa. The committee approved the proposal with a vote of 6-0, subject to recommended revisions.

The recommended revisions have now been incorporated.

The revised proposals are forwarded with this email.

Best,
Prasad