



Questions
and Answers
about
Shalem College

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THE BASICS

What is Shalem College?

Shalem College will be the first institution of higher education in Israel to offer a “liberal arts” education modeled on such elite Anglo-American institutions as Harvard, Princeton and Oxford and rooted in classic Jewish and Western texts. The College has recruited a first-rate, internationally renowned faculty, and hopes to attract the very best students from a wide range of geographic, political, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds to cultivate a cadre of broadly-educated, committed citizen leaders for the Jewish state and the Jewish people. We have applied for accreditation to the Council for Higher Education in Israel and hope to open our doors in 2013.

What makes Shalem College different from existing institutions of higher education in Israel?

Israeli universities, founded by European immigrants and patterned on the classic German research university, typically offer narrow training geared toward specific disciplines and careers. Students are admitted into a particular department in which they fulfill nearly all of their required credits, and are deprived of the opportunity to engage with the vast majority of texts and ideas critical to the formation of articulate, thoughtful leaders. This approach has indeed produced superstars in technology, science and other fields, but has been less successful in inspiring today’s young people with a sense of mission and broad vision. Shalem College’s pioneering program will rigorously combine the wealth of Jewish and Zionist tradition with classical Western thought through the ages. It is built around a core curriculum of general study in conjunction with a major track that reflects the needs of contemporary Israel. Our ideas-based education is designed to produce innovative civic leaders and strategic thinkers who will ascend to positions of real influence in all sectors of Israeli life.

What is the Shalem College curriculum?

Shalem College will be a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)-granting institution offering a core curriculum of required courses for all students alongside a choice of major concentrations, allowing each to pursue a more specialized course of study. This core curriculum, the centerpiece of education at Shalem College offered under the auspices of the Liberal Studies Department, will place a strong emphasis on the study of classic texts and the development of research and writing skills. It includes courses in Jewish thought, Western philosophy, literature, world history, Jewish history, economics, and more. The opening majors will include an Interdisciplinary Program in Philosophy

and Jewish Thought (IPJ) and a course of study in Middle East and Islamic Studies (MEIS). Other majors in the fields of law, government and diplomacy, economics, and literature will be added as the College matures.

What degrees will Shalem College offer?

Initially, there will be two majors from which students can choose. The Interdisciplinary Program in Philosophy, Political Theory and Religion offers a rigorous education in the great ideas and texts of the Western and the Jewish traditions, ranging from Plato and Aristotle to the Bible and the Talmud, all the way through contemporary trends in analytic and continental philosophy, ethics, psychology, philosophy of language, theology, and political and social thought.

The Middle East and Islamic Studies major will teach students the Arabic language and literature through a unique immersion program, developing their ability to read and understand the most significant texts of the Islamic tradition, from the Koran through contemporary sermons. While most Middle East programs emphasize historical study and classical texts, or contemporary society and politics, the premise of MEIS at Shalem College is that one cannot understand the latter without a profound grasp of the former. Given the importance of Jewish texts and traditions in the formulation of Islam, the MEIS program will build on the familiarity of its students with Jewish texts to provide a gateway into Islam.

As the college grows, we hope to add additional majors.

What will be the language of instruction at Shalem College?

The B.A. program at Shalem College will be taught in Hebrew. However, as English is the international language of commerce, diplomacy and academic discourse, it is important that graduates of Shalem College know it well, too. Students at Shalem College will be required to read extensively in English.

The majors at Shalem College will include language instruction; in the case of MEIS, all students will be expected to learn Arabic. In IPJ, those students interested in pursuing graduate study will be expected to undertake intensive study of an additional language, such as Greek or German, during the summers after their second and third years at Shalem College.

Will Shalem College offer graduate programs?

In accordance with the practice at Israel's Council for Higher Education, institutions cannot be accredited to offer a Masters program in Israel until after they have successfully run B.A. programs for a number of years.

It is therefore likely that the opening of accredited graduate programs at Shalem College will follow several years after the start of the undergraduate programs.

When will Shalem College open?

Shalem staff submitted an application for accreditation to Israel's Council for Higher Education in March 2009. The process for granting a new permit to an institution typically takes three years and, based on our progress to date, we hope to receive accreditation by early 2012. We expect to recruit the first class in time to open in 2013 .

Where will Shalem College be located?

Shalem College will be located in Israel's capital city, Jerusalem. We are working directly with Mayor of Jerusalem Nir Barkat and his senior staff to locate and secure a suitable campus in the city.

WHY SHALEM COLLEGE?

Is there a need for a new type of higher education in Israel?

Israel and its leaders can expect to face many challenges in the future. We need to develop visionaries who, like the inspiring leaders of an earlier generation, have a deep appreciation of both the human and Jewish conditions—where we have been as a people, where we should be headed, what our purpose is, and how best to achieve it. The curriculum of Shalem College is intended to provide a systematic way for talented individuals to develop this kind of vision. We expect our graduates to assume leadership roles in myriad fields and have a significant impact on Israeli society and humanity at large. Additionally, Shalem College will be a center of research and an incubator for original ideas that can exert a profound influence on the general intellectual discourse in Israel and around the world.

Why establish a new college focused on the study of humanities when the study of humanities is in decline both in Israel and around the world?

We are establishing Shalem College in the belief that Israel needs at least one institution devoted to liberal arts education in order to train its next generation of leaders. A liberal arts education—while not appropriate for

all students—remains the best type of preparation for future leadership of a nation or people. In the United States, for example, top high school graduates continue flocking to colleges and universities such as Harvard, Yale and Princeton, which provide a liberal arts education along with the knowledge and skills to pursue a lifetime of learning and leadership.

This model of education remains very much in demand in the United States today, where hundreds of institutions—including most of the country's top-ranked colleges and universities—combine a broad program of general education with specialized study in a particular discipline. It is also on the rise in Canada, Europe and Great Britain, and likewise in Asia's growing nations and oil-rich countries, as they seek to encourage pluralism and democracy after decades of dictatorial rule. Programs that encourage students to address the issues with which they naturally grapple, such as the nature of humankind, the challenges and opportunities that humanity now faces, and how to find meaning as individuals and members of a community, continue to attract the very best students from around the world.

The establishment of Shalem College is intended to contribute to reversing the decline of humanities in Israel, which have been eroded by over-specialization at the undergraduate level, funding cuts to the country's universities, and university fundraising campaigns that have focused principally on emphasizing Israel's scientific potential rather than its accomplishments and needs in the humanities.

THE IMPACT OF SHALEM COLLEGE

What impact will Shalem College have on Israeli society?

In today's increasingly post-national world, Israel faces an internal threat stemming from the growing loss of conviction on the part of its young people regarding the justness of its founding and the legitimacy of its continued existence as a Jewish state. This loss of conviction has resulted in, among other things, a "brain drain" affecting Israel's best and brightest in fields ranging from medicine to business to academia.

Shalem College—through an intensive program of study of Jewish history, Israeli history, Zionist thought, and political theory—will encourage and support gifted, thoughtful students as they wrestle with the most difficult questions about the State of Israel and their future as its citizens. As Shalem College graduates continue on to express these well-thought-out convictions in the educational, academic and public arenas, they will have an impact critical in shaping the convictions of future generations of Israelis.

Can a college that will have only 1,000 undergraduates have a significant impact on the State of Israel?

Israel is a small country of 7 million inhabitants whose political, cultural, professional, and academic leadership comprises fewer than 1,000 people. If Shalem College graduates 250 students per year, drawn from among the most promising young men and women in the country, and if only five percent of these graduates ultimately go on to leading positions within Israeli society, then within a couple of decades, the college can have a transformative effect. To put this in perspective, Harvard, Princeton and Yale together grant only 5,000 B.A. degrees each year in a country of over 300 million inhabitants. Yet these graduates have a vastly disproportionate impact on American life. In Israel, with only 7 million inhabitants, the equivalent of the 5,000 graduated each year by America's top three colleges is 125. This is well within Shalem College's enrollment projections.

What impact will Shalem College have on the Jewish world?

A strong and thriving Israel is vitally important to every Jewish community in the world. An Israel admired by Jews and by the world has the potential to be the single most powerful force for the stability and flourishing of Jewish life around the world. Shalem College will strengthen Israel; a strong Israel will strengthen Jewry everywhere.

In addition, Shalem College will have a direct, educational impact on the Jewish people as it accepts outstanding students from abroad to its four-year B.A. program and, later, to a one-year program, in English, for overseas students. The programs' focus on Jewish and Israeli history, Jewish and general philosophy, Zionist thought, and moral and political thought will encourage these young Jews to develop their own Jewish identity in a world where such identity cannot be taken for granted.

THE STUDENTS

What type of students will enroll at Shalem College?

Once accredited, Shalem College will recruit young men and women who have the talent, motivation and intellectual curiosity to successfully complete a program of study as rigorous as that offered at the best institutions of higher education in the world. We are committed to recruiting a highly diverse student body that reflects the broad range of Israeli society—geographically, socioeconomically, religiously, and intellectually. Likewise, we

expect to recruit a portion of each incoming class from among students outside Israel. Students will be accepted to Shalem College without regard for religious, national or ethnic origins.

How many students will study at Shalem College each year?

Initially, the entering classes at Shalem College will number 50 to 100 students; over time, this will be expanded to 250 students per class, for a total undergraduate body of 1,000 students. At peak, we expect the College will also include up to 200 graduate students.

What are Shalem College's admissions criteria?

Most programs at Israel's universities and colleges accept students exclusively on the basis of their scores in the *bagrut* (matriculation) and psychometric examinations (the latter is similar to the American SAT). Shalem College's admissions process, however, will entail a much more holistic approach. In addition to considering students' academic records, the College's admissions process will include a detailed application designed to identify students with exceptional intellectual and extracurricular interests and talents, rich backgrounds in volunteer activities, and demonstrated leadership and dedication in frameworks such as the Israel Defense Forces and national service.

The admissions process at Shalem will likewise rely on one or more in-depth interviews, and might well incorporate "sample seminars" in which prospective students take part in a series of classes, during a period of one day or perhaps more, in order to establish who is most likely to thrive in and contribute to the College's educational atmosphere.

Is there student demand for an institution of higher education like Shalem College?

To determine student demand for Shalem College, we commissioned two separate, independent surveys of a diverse group of men and women whose *bagrut* (matriculation) and psychometric exam (similar to the American SAT) scores place them in the top third of all university applicants in Israel and who plan to begin their undergraduate studies in the next 18 months. Results from both surveys support the conclusion that there is demand for a college like Shalem among a significant percentage of potential students.

An estimated 55,000 students begin undergraduate studies in Israel each year. Of the top one-third of all applicants, corresponding to roughly 18,000 students, approximately 12 percent of those surveyed indicated an interest in attending a college like Shalem College "to a great degree" and would

“place it at the top of their list of choices.” These respondents represent a pool of approximately 2,000 potential students, from which Shalem College hopes to recruit 60 for its inaugural class. This is equivalent to three percent (3%) of those students who meet our criteria, a goal we are confident we can attain.

How will Shalem College recruit students for its inaugural year?

Shalem College’s recruitment plan will include an intensive process of meeting with dozens of individuals who are influential in affecting decisions by top students regarding their choice of college or university, including heads of pre-army preparatory institutes, high school principals, officers in the elite army units that attract the most gifted and motivated young people, and others similarly placed.

Once Shalem College is accredited, we will carry out a nationwide marketing campaign, which will include a substantial Internet and social media component. We also expect to host a series of open houses in which prospective students will not only hear about Shalem College, but will also take part in seminars that will enable them to make a more informed decision as to whether the Shalem approach is right for them.

What will the cost be for students to attend Shalem College? Will financial aid be available?

Shalem College will, at the outset, charge tuition of approximately \$10,000 a year, which is commensurate with the rates at the other top private colleges in Israel. In the initial years, it will be necessary to provide significant scholarships to a substantial proportion of Shalem’s students, especially as most of them, if they opted to attend one of Israel’s universities, would benefit not only from low tuition but also from the full scholarships provided to top candidates—and in some cases, from stipends as well.

THE FACULTY

Who will teach at Shalem College?

Shalem’s faculty reflects a wide range of intellectual interests, beliefs and approaches. Faculty members at Shalem College are chosen based on their proven records in scholarly research, their abilities and dedication as teachers and their commitment to the educational mission of the College.

Student-faculty interaction—especially outside the classroom—will be a critical element of the Shalem College education. As such, we seek faculty members who will fully dedicate themselves to their students, evaluating and commenting on their work, meeting with them formally and informally, and more.

Currently, the Shalem College faculty includes such renowned scholars as Martin Kramer (Shalem College president-designate); Suzanne Stone (Liberal Studies Department head); Menachem Kellner (Interdisciplinary Program in Philosophy, Political Theory and Religion); Asa Kasher, the highly regarded Israeli philosopher; and Middle East scholars Yitzhak Hasson and Ze'ev Maghen. Likewise, some veterans of Shalem's intellectual community, including Daniel Gordis, Yoram Hazony and Daniel Polisar are expected to serve on the faculty, alongside a number of younger scholars currently affiliated with The Shalem Center.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SHALEM COLLEGE

Where does Shalem's funding come from?

Shalem's revenues come overwhelmingly from private donors, supplemented by a modest amount of income from the sale of publications. Shalem does not seek government funding. In May 2011, Shalem announced a historic \$12.5 million gift from The Tikvah Fund that will match, dollar for dollar, the unrestricted gifts of other visionary philanthropists. Additionally, we are in the process of acquiring Section 46 certification for Israeli tax deductible status, which will allow us to more aggressively target Israeli philanthropy in support of the College.



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