

The Pinchas Sapir Faculty
of Humanities and Social Sciences



אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב
جامعة بن غوريون في النقب
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The HEART and of SOUL BGU





THINK



SOCIAL MEDIA
IS ABOUT
SOCIOLOGY AND
PSYCHOLOGY
MORE THAN
TECHNOLOGY

BGU

בג"ד

الكويت

POWER
WORK
OF

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Education is the most
powerful weapon to
change the world



SAVE OUR PLANET

THIS STORY
IS ABOUT
HUMANITY



انقاذ

מילים יכולות להרוג

WORDS CAN KILL

TY IS THE
ST FORM
IOLENCE

QUESTION

EVERYTHING

HTS

اسأل عن كل شيء

WE HAVE
JUST BEGUN

WORLD

poetry
DAY





Humanities and Social Sciences in Today's World

Imagine a world of black and white.

- A world without human and cultural understanding; without the arts, the ability to communicate in other languages, or the ability to communicate effectively at all.
- A society whose members lack problem solving or analytic skills, the ability to appreciate cultural differences, or knowledge of the past in all its complexity – history, politics, religions, philosophy – or the tools this knowledge provides for understanding the present and preparing for the future.
- An era of rapidly changing technologies where people lack the skills to engage with the accompanying ethical questions, to understand the impact of these changes on society, or to ensure that such technologies don't increase societal divides.

As an institution for higher learning that places great value on our students' development as people and understands the importance of the humanities and social sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev encourages its students and researchers to explore these subjects as a means of acquiring the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to be instruments of change towards a better world.

Nowhere is this truer than at the Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, a Faculty whose ethos is rooted in an appreciation of the multiple hues in our societal landscape and an interest in exploring these nuances from the perspective of diverse disciplines that enrich our world; and an understanding of the importance of a diversity of disciplines and perspectives in creating well-rounded, informed, and sensitive students, and a more just, inclusive, and humane society.

The Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The thriving Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev encompasses diverse disciplines ranging from history, philosophy, Jewish thought, and the arts, to archaeology, social work, psychology, economics, and political science – disciplines that touch on virtually all aspects of life.

The Faculty is the University's oldest and largest faculty, and represents the heart and soul of BGU, with departments, study programs, and centers that foster research that impacts people and society, and educational programs and enriching activities that impart knowledge, skills, and values, ensuring that BGU graduates will be equipped with academic degrees and character, able to contribute to the communities they are part of.

20 departments

1,600 graduate students

3,500 undergraduate students

The largest departments

Department
of Psychology

**over 1,100
students**



Department of
Economics

**over 800
students**



Charlotte B. and
Jack J. Spitzer
Department of
Social Work

**over 650
students**



Department of
Education

**over 650
students**

With special study programs like the African Studies, Conflict Management and Resolution, and Gender Studies programs; and a growing number of dual degree programs and exciting new academic tracks (including a minor in entrepreneurship), the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is continuously evolving in response to the needs and interests of students and society.

The Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences strives to contribute to the well-being of society in the Negev, Israel, and around the world, and each of its departments and programs plays a unique role in attaining this goal, as they educate Israel's next generation of psychologists, economists, social workers, teachers, cognition experts, historians, political scientists, media specialists, and more, while its scholars and researchers perform compelling and impactful research that touches on all aspects of life.

In a vibrant setting where dialogue is encouraged, research and studies actively explore the most fundamental subjects that shape our society. As they do so, our researchers (graduate students and faculty members alike) shed light on a wide range of important topics, and **our students gain valuable communication, critical thinking, and reasoning skills, and become more tolerant, sensitive, and open-minded.** This intellectual environment and ethos shapes our students' personal and professional development and ensures that they have the understanding and problem-solving and interpersonal skills needed for success in all areas of life.





New Initiatives at the Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences encourages research collaboration across the disciplines and this, combined with its diversity, provides a fertile intellectual framework. The Faculty actively seeks opportunities for joint research and study programs, bridging departments both within the Faculty and beyond.

We are pleased to present some of the Faculty's current initiatives, which leverage its strengths and unique areas of expertise and increase the impact of its research. This provides a sense of the Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences' far reaching impact and ability to affect individual students and the wider society, and showcases the critical role the humanities and social sciences play in today's world.



Community Mental Health Clinic

Residents in southern Israel, including the greater Beer-Sheva region, have historically had limited access to state-of-the-art psychological treatment. In 2018, the Department of Psychology established the Ben-Gurion University Community Mental Health Clinic to provide this underserved population with cutting-edge psychological services, train clinical psychology doctoral interns to deliver such treatment, and conduct rigorous outcome and process psychotherapy research. In 2021, the clinic was fully credentialed as a training site by the Israeli Ministry of Health. The community clinic is run by world-renowned faculty members who are experts in different types of therapy approaches and clinical populations and conduct groundbreaking research. Examples of the clinic's innovative approach and programs include:

- “Out of the closet, into the family” is a unique clinical research project designed to examine the efficacy of attachment-based family therapy for sexual and gender minority young adults and their non-accepting parents, with the goal of rebuilding relationships within these families.
- People in distress are often ambivalent about seeking therapy due to stigma, lack of familiarity, or previous experiences. Brief interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT) interventions have the potential to overcome such barriers, and BGU researchers are developing and evaluating cutting-edge brief evidence-based IPT interventions for people with high levels of depressive symptoms.
- In vitro fertilization (IVF) often engenders significant personal and relational stress. In a collaborative project with Soroka University Medical Center's IVF unit, distressed couples are offered emotion-focused therapy aimed at facilitating dyadic responsiveness (emotional disclosure, support) to ease their distress.
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), a severe disorder associated with significant distress and functional impairment, is often under- or misdiagnosed, and thus treated ineffectively. The Community Mental Health Clinic provides state-of-the-art specialized intensive treatment to individuals suffering from OCD, a service that was previously largely unavailable in the south.



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The BGU Community Mental Health Clinic is changing the lives of people living in the south of Israel who, for the first time, have access to state-of-the-art psychological treatments.

Prof. Gary Diamond, Department of Psychology

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Digital Humanities and Social Sciences Consortium

The Digital Humanities and Social Sciences Consortium advances the integration of digital tools into the humanities and social sciences, leveraging computer science in new ways in the exciting and rapidly expanding domain of the digital humanities and social sciences. As it develops, the consortium will strive to:

- Open the door to innovations in research and teaching and expand the use of digital tools to increase the contribution and impact of the Faculty's research.
- Facilitate new forms of art and computational literary studies, allowing researchers to examine texts with new lens and extract previously inaccessible data.
- Facilitate the use of data mining, modeling, and natural language processing (NLP) on existing and new data resources, enabling researchers to dig deeper and see the bigger picture.
- Bridge data science with psychology, literature, economics, history, and more, to expand knowledge bases and unleash the potential of data.

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We believe that our contribution is not limited to Hebrew literature, but is relevant to anyone who desires to connect the two worlds – the scientific and the humanistic.

Dr. Itay Marienberg-Milikowsky, Department of Hebrew Literature

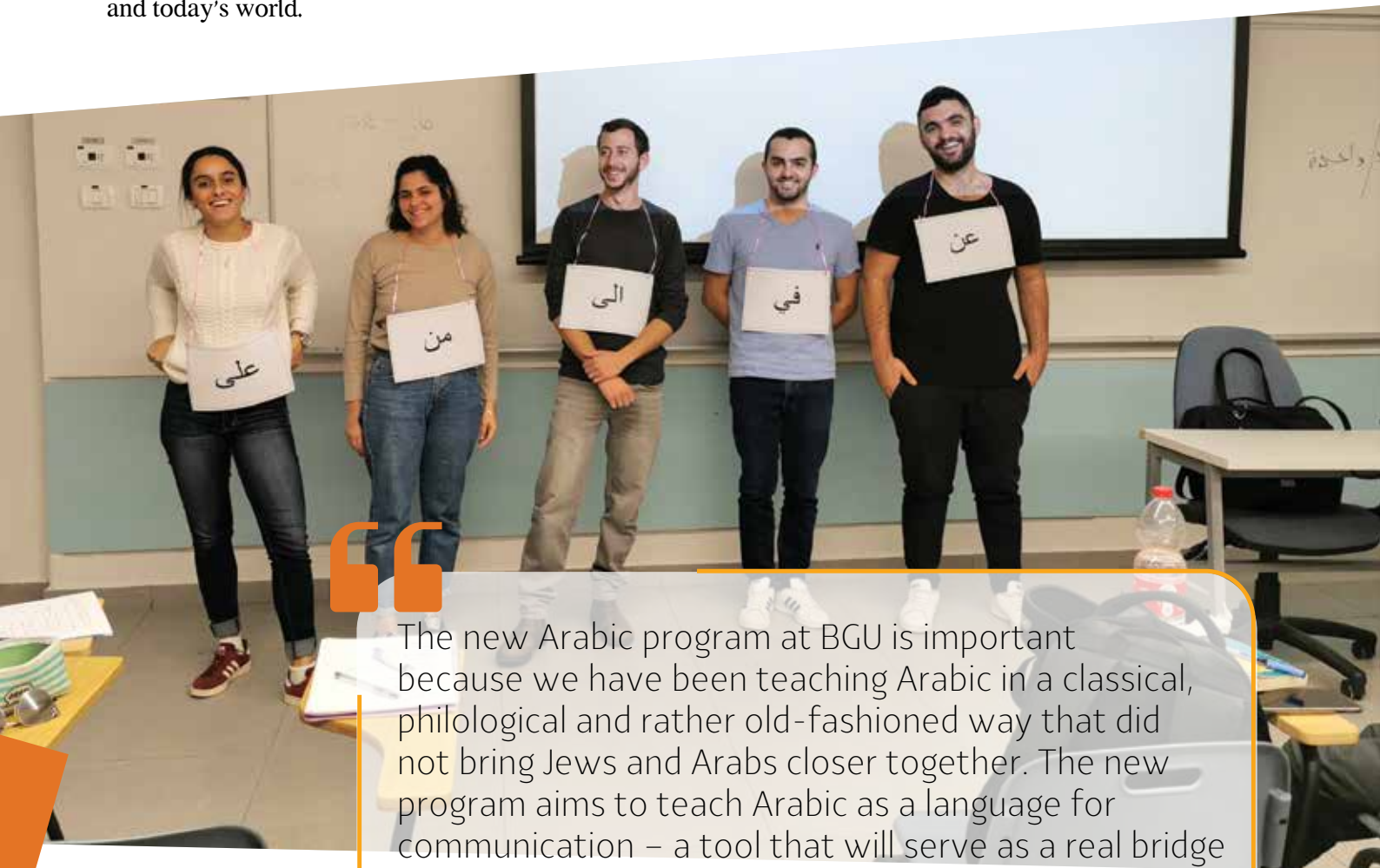
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Innovative New Arabic Language Program

Arabic is the mother tongue of Israel's Arab citizens and was an official language of the state (between 1948 and 2018, when it was designated a language with 'special status'). Arabic is the language closest to Hebrew and is an important aspect of Jewish heritage. Moreover, Arabic is taught in Jewish-Israeli schools, yet very few Israeli Jews are proficient in Arabic at any level - a recent survey found that only 2.6% can read a short newspaper article in Arabic, and just 1.4% percent can write a short paragraph or email in Arabic, with practically none capable of reading a book in Arabic!

In 2019-2020, the Department of Middle East Studies took a major step in addressing this issue by launching an innovative Arabic language program as part of its undergraduate degree coursework. In contrast to Arabic classes elsewhere in Israel and many parts of the world, the program is taught in Arabic and yields much better results; interest in the program has soared, with 75 first-year students enrolling in the program in 2020-2021.

The ability to understand Arabic and converse in it opens the door to better communication. Greater understanding and appreciation of the primary language spoken in the Middle East will ensure that our students are both more informed and sensitive citizens, and better equipped for work in relevant fields. This will have broad societal impact, influencing Jewish-Arab relations in Israel, Israel's relations with its neighbors, and the development of new cultural and economic enterprises, and enable a new way of examining Jewish history and today's world.



The new Arabic program at BGU is important because we have been teaching Arabic in a classical, philological and rather old-fashioned way that did not bring Jews and Arabs closer together. The new program aims to teach Arabic as a language for communication – a tool that will serve as a real bridge to the Arab world.

Dr. Yonatan Mendel, Department of Middle East Studies



Amos Oz International Residency Program

Amos Oz z"l, an emeritus faculty member at BGU, was one of the most important and influential Hebrew writers of his generation. A longtime resident of the Negev city of Arad, Prof. Oz inspired creativity among Negev residents. This was fostered over the years by BGU programs like the Amos Oz Initiative for Literature and Culture in Arad, which features an annual conference, ongoing workshops, a lecture series, and more, and is aimed at strengthening Arad and deepening its connection to BGU, and the establishment of the Beer-Sheva Writers' House in honor of Amos Oz, a lively and active literary cultural community center and academic research center.

BGU's Department of Hebrew Literature, one of the University's flagship departments and home to Heksherim - the Research Institute for Jewish and Israeli Literature and Culture, plans to establish the Amos Oz International Residency Program, as a prestigious international residency program for writers. The Department's reputation and the legacy of Oz will attract a cadre of well-known international writers to the program. The presence of such writers, with different writing styles and approaches to literature, will enrich the academic experience at BGU and stimulate the Negev's literary climate.

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The vibrant intellectual environment of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as the beauty of the desert in which we live and work, are the perfect setting for a community of writers and poets from around the world.

Prof. Haim Weiss, Department of Hebrew Literature

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Israeli Center for Poverty and Social Justice

Despite government efforts to reduce poverty and Israel's status as the "start-up nation," poverty rates in Israel are high compared to other OECD countries; approximately one in five adults and one in three children live in poverty. Through the proposed Israeli Center for Poverty and Social Justice, BGU researchers aim to perform evidence-based research that will improve poverty-related policy and practices. The center's approach is based on the Poverty-Aware Paradigm (PAP), which was developed at BGU's Charlotte B. and Jack J. Spitzer Department of Social Work and has gained significant international interest and local influence. As Israel's first academic center dedicated to this issue, the center will develop theoretically and ethically grounded research and serve as Israel's primary source of research and knowledge on poverty and social justice, as well as place the University among the ranks of prestigious academic institutions around the world that address the issue of poverty.

The center will bring together researchers from diverse academic disciplines, including social work, sociology, anthropology, law, education, psychology, management, and health sciences, and establish collaborations with policy-makers, NGOs, and activists.

The center aims to:

- Develop research-based knowledge that contributes to an ethical approach to poverty.
- Influence public policy.
- Generate changes in the public perception of poverty and attitudes regarding people living in poverty.
- Create changes in practice among those interfacing with people living in poverty.
- Serve as a lab for innovative practices.



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Professionals have a moral duty to acknowledge the real alternatives that people have when faced with a choice. Poverty means diminished opportunities, meaning limited genuine options.

Prof. Michal Krumer-Nevo, Charlotte B. and Jack J. Spitzer
Department of Social Work

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REACH.ME: Research Center for the Study of Children and Media

The Research Center for the Study of Children and Media will be dedicated to studying the role of information and communication technologies in child development and family life. The first of its kind in Israel and one of just a few worldwide, the multidisciplinary center will bring together researchers from the social sciences (communication, psychology, education) engineering and the health sciences and address a major contemporary concern worldwide.

Researchers will examine all stages of childhood and adolescence, with particular emphasis on early childhood. Despite attracting considerable public and media attention, this research domain is underdeveloped, and REACH.ME intends to address this gap for the benefit of individual children, parents, and families, and society as a whole, by focusing on:

- Children and media - exploring the connection between life in the digital age and the cognitive, emotional, and social development and well-being of children in all stages of childhood; digital connections and relationships; media's negative effects and how to reduce them; children as content consumers and creators; and the positive use of media.
- Parents and media - investigating parental media literacy and awareness; use of media as a parenting tool; parental mediation of media content and use; parents as content creators; and parental supervision of media use.
- The child-oriented media industry - examining and monitoring media content and platforms targeting young children; media policies and regulations; and media creators (attitudes, background, awareness).

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It seems that the digital world, mobile phones, and screens are here to stay, and we need to learn how to live with them and how to take advantage of them, benefit from their use, and reduce the risks involved in them.

Prof. Naama Atzaba-Poria, Department of Psychology

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Multicultural Jewish-Bedouin Teacher Preparation Program

One third of the participants in programs run by the Department of Education's Unit for the Promotion of Professionalism in Education are Bedouin or Arabs who teach in the Bedouin school system, and the unit has identified a significant need to improve its integrative joint training and instruction approach. Efforts are currently underway to better meet the needs of all teacher-participants and the educational systems they will be part of.

The unit is developing a new multicultural (Jewish-Bedouin) teacher preparation program that will better serve all students while promoting equity and tolerance. The first phase of the program will focus on the curriculum, establishing relevant separate courses and/or separate spaces within shared courses, and adjusting instructional methods, course assignments, and reading materials; integrating multicultural elements throughout the training program; and recruiting Bedouin/Arab lecturers to the program's staff.

The second phase will focus on the teaching practicum, aiming to improve its quality and outcomes in Bedouin schools by strengthening the connection between the schools and the program. In addition to the "regular" format where the practicum is performed by Bedouin participants in Bedouin schools and Jewish participants in Jewish schools, a new voluntary track in which Bedouin students are placed in Jewish schools (and vice versa) will be explored, with the aim of expanding students' employment options and increasing familiarity among the two populations.

The knowledge gained in developing this program will help improve other programs and enable the unit to provide students and practitioners with the knowledge, skills, training, and understanding needed to educate and contribute to a complex and continuously changing multicultural society.

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I felt my Bedouin students weren't getting the instruction they deserved and needed as future teachers. I rarely heard their voices in class, and I couldn't tell what they made of the discussions and what their learning gains were.

Dr. Dana Vedder-Weiss, Department of Education

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The Center for Conflict Management & Research

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The center focuses on two circles – the family and the community – as the most important components in developing a stable and cohesive society in southern Israel.

Dr. Sarah Abu-Kaf, Conflict Resolution & Management Program

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Emerging from the Faculty's well-known Conflict Management & Resolution Program, the new Center for Conflict Management & Research will promote research and understanding of conflicts, both in the context of family relationships and in the context of diversity and multiculturalism. The center will also be a home for the development of groundbreaking practices dealing with the management, resolution, and solution of disputes through dialogue and discussion, consensus building, negotiations, mediation, and more.

Research at the center will draw on a range disciplines, including social psychology, family psychology, political science and international relations, sociology, anthropology, education, and law, and will welcome interested researchers, students, and professionals, creating a collaborative research environment and an open space for dialogue, the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and translating research to the field.

More concretely, the center will provide counseling services (free of charge) to various communities regarding conflicts and disagreements. Practical solutions will also be provided to families experiencing conflicts and/or facing separation/divorce.

The center will focus on three main types of activity:

- **Training** - The center will train students, enabling them to acquire the skills, tools, and practical competencies needed to manage and resolve conflicts at the family and community level. Part of the training will take place in collaboration with community centers, courts, and municipal bodies.
- **Research** - Faculty members and students will benefit from the center's tools and resources in conducting research and disseminating their results to both academic and professional audiences.
- **Enrichment** - Guest lectures, workshops, seminars, and conferences held at the national and international level will promote the exchange of knowledge between researchers and professionals who analyze, manage, and resolve conflicts.



Center for the Study of Attention and Sleep Problems

Psychopathologies, such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and sleep disorders, manifest in childhood and persist into adulthood, preventing those affected from reaching their full potential and negatively impacting their day-to-day functioning and lives.

One of the most common behavioral disorders in childhood, ADHD is also one of the most common reasons for referral to mental health services. It is characterized by age-inappropriate levels of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, and executive function and self-regulation deficits, which may result in problems such as low academic achievement and school expulsion, early substance abuse, and delinquency.

Comorbidity with other psychopathologies, particularly sleep disorders, is also common, with approximately 75% of those suffering from ADHD also exhibiting sleep onset insomnia. Sleep problems can adversely affect children's socio-emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development, as well as family functioning and parental mental health. Sleep disorders in adulthood are associated with depression and anxiety and may be a risk factor for depressive disorders. Those diagnosed with both ADHD and a sleep disorder struggle on numerous fronts, as their productivity, ability to focus and stay on task, and energy level suffers, interfering with their ability to function.

The Center for the Study of Attention Deficits and Sleep Problems will draw on research expertise from the Department of Psychology. Researchers will examine attention and sleep problems across the lifespan, exploring their impact on executive functioning and self-regulation from developmental, cognitive, neuroscientific, and clinical perspectives and methodologies, with the aim of alleviating such problems and improving the quality of life of those suffering from them.

Faculty Departments and Programs

Departments and Units

Department of the Arts
Department of Bible Studies, Archeology and the Ancient Near East
Department of Communication Studies
Department of Economics
Department of Education
Unit for the Advancement of Educational Professionalism
Department of Science and Technology Education
Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics
Department of General History
Department of Geography and Environmental Development
Department of Hebrew Language
Department of Hebrew Literature
Department of Jewish History
Goldstein-Goren Department of Jewish Thought
Department of Middle East Studies
Department of Multidisciplinary Studies
Department of Philosophy
Department of Politics and Government
Department of Psychology
Charlotte B. and Jack J. Spitzer Department of Social Work
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
English as a Foreign Language Unit

Study Programs (partial list)

Adenauer Division for the Studies of European Politics and Society
African Studies
Arabic Language and Culture Studies
Behavioral Sciences
Conflict Management and Resolution
Gender Studies
Israel Studies

Affiliated Departments and Programs

Department of Cognitive and Brain Sciences
Statistics and Data Analysis Program

The Center's synergetic combination of researchers will provide a unique and novel opportunity to investigate the interaction between ADHD and sleep disorders impairing executive functioning and self-regulation and develop evidence-based treatments for these problems.

Prof. Liat Tikotzky, Department of Psychology



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To support a flourishing Pinchas Sapir Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the heart and soul of the University, please contact BGU's Department of Resource Development at: donors@bgu.ac.il.

For more information about BGU and the Faculty, visit our website at <https://in.bgu.ac.il/en> and follow us here: 