



The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University



THE INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



2nd Annual Report 2023-24

<https://en-social-sciences.tau.ac.il/igs3>

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INCEPTION AND VISION

Tel Aviv University is the largest and most comprehensive university in Israel. Its 1,000 researchers and 30,000 students are expanding knowledge daily across the academic spectrum. TAU is the intellectual engine powering Israel's startup culture and successful economy and is ranked among the top 10 most innovative educational institutions in the world. The Gershon H. Gordon Faculty of Social Sciences of TAU is the biggest and most prominent faculty at TAU, attracting young bright faculty members, and an ever increasing number of students.

Professor Itai Sened, the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, established the International Graduate School for Social Sciences (IGS³) in 2021, to expand its international academic activity and become a focal point for international research and its international, higher education programs. The new school includes all the Faculty's International M.A. programs, hosts dozens of internationally renowned scholars as affiliated and visiting professors annually and operates as a faculty-level support system for international activity at all levels. The school puts an emphasis on inter-disciplinarity and innovation in teaching and research, focusing on creating the next generation of bright young researchers, experts and policy makers, to be taught and guided by the best researchers of the world's top universities.

At its third year of operation, after the most difficult year Israel has ever experienced in its history, and in a very challenging international academic atmosphere, we stand strong and resilient like Israel does.

Our goal for the future is to maintain and strengthen our international partnerships and collaborations, welcome more incoming international students and scholars, and boost the impact of TAU's Social Sciences and Tel Aviv University more in the global academic arena.



LETTER FROM HEAD OF IGS³, PROF. ITAI SENED

The new International Graduate School of Social Science reflects the vision of Professor Ariel Porat, the President of TAU of enhancing TAU's visibility and leadership in the international arena. On the one hand we attract students from all over the world, who wish to benefit from the knowledge accumulated here in Israel, and specifically at TAU, in the social sciences. On the other, we essentially 'bring the world' to Israeli students and faculty – in the form of world-class lecturers, researchers and supervisors from around the globe. In this way we encourage our students and researchers to stay here with us. Ultimately, thanks to its dynamic entrepreneurial spirit, the school will become an international hub for the exchange of ideas and growth of knowledge in many areas of the social sciences that are at the heart of the human experience and critical challenges of our times.

Everyone talks about the hi-tech, start-up, nation, but Israel in general and Tel Aviv University in particular, have a great deal more to offer. Israel has accumulated immense knowledge and experience in many non-technological areas, and Israeli expertise is in great demand all over the world. Our school's programs cover sustainability, climate change, security, conflict resolution and cyber governance. Soon enough, we are going to open a new program in Russian Studies where for obvious reason we have a unique perspective of knowledge.

Our goal is to make the vast knowledge amassed here at TAU, and throughout the state of Israel, accessible to the entire world, while bringing the best researchers from around the globe to further advance this knowledge.

Professor Itai Sened

Head of the International Graduate School of Social Sciences

IGS³ TEAM



Prof. Paul Romer, Professor by Special Appointment

Prof. Paul Romer from NYU is the 2018 Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics, and one of the world's most inspiring thinkers in his field. Prof. Romer is a staunch supporter of the IGS³ and has agreed to lead the school's excellent cohort of visiting scholars. We are so very grateful for his support and vision in establishing the school.



Prof. Itai Sened, Head of IGS³

Prof. Itai Sened is the outgoing Dean of the Gershon H. Gordon Faculty of Social Sciences at Tel Aviv University. He returned to TAU after serving for 12 years as director of the Institute for New Institutional Social Sciences at Washington University, which was established by Nobel Laureate Douglass C. North. He is the founding head of the Boris Mints Institute for Strategic Policy Solution to Global Challenges and the founding Head of the School of Social and Policy studies at TAU.



Ayelet Fishman. Adv., Administrative Director of IGS³

Mrs. Fishman received her LL.B. from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem as well as an M.A. in Public Policy, with distinction, from Tel Aviv University. She formerly served as the Israeli Ministry of the Interior's National Elections Supervisor and the Administrative Director of the Boris Mints Institute.



INTERNATIONAL MA PROGRAMS

The International Graduate School of Social Sciences offers five M.A. programs for international students, all of which are executed with the highest academic standards and taught in English. The programs are one calendric year (3 semesters) long. The graduates of these programs receive a Master's degree from Tel Aviv University.

Our programs are drawing excellent students from all over the world, who enrich us (and one another) with diverse viewpoints, perspectives and innovative insights. Our international programs are designed and taught out of a dynamic and interdisciplinary perspective. The IGS³ trains its students as professionals who will become leading entrepreneurs and policy makers all around the world. We are happy to say that despite the challenging geo-political situation in Israel and worldwide, we were able to maintain all of our academic routines and continue to run all of our programs as usual, including special activities, field trips and all.

These are our international M.A. programs:

The International Program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation



This program is a one-year interdisciplinary MA program taught in English with an optional research track (MA thesis and PhD). Students graduate with a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution and Mediation. The program provides students with tools for effective analysis, negotiation strategies, and conflict resolution frameworks in the international arena. Students also earn a certificate issued by Tel Aviv University for completing the program's workshop in International Mediation.

For further information: <https://resolution.tau.ac.il/>

The International Program in Security and Diplomacy



From a geo-political standpoint, Israel is at the focus of the world's attention in security and diplomacy matters. It has, thus, amassed a huge body of professional expertise in both of those fields. Embodying this locus of knowledge and skills, our International MA program in Security and Diplomacy brings together internationally renowned scholars, former and most current leading practitioners in both security and diplomacy, offering students an exceptional learning experience. Educational tours and meetings with Israeli and foreign officials are incorporated into the curriculum. Students are encouraged to take up internships and other extra-curricular activities during their year stay in Israel. The

program provides advanced knowledge and analytical tools for the study of strategy, diplomacy, decision-making and the shaping of security and foreign policy. At the practical level, the program prepares students for engagement in the international arena, defense bodies, international organizations (both governmental and NGOs) and international economic organizations. This program's graduates were nominated as valedictorians at the TAU End of the Year Ceremonies for the past two years, a selection which makes us very proud.

For further information please consult our website at: <https://secdip.tau.ac.il/>

The International Program in Sustainable Development



The program combines class-based and experiential learning. During their studies, students take active roles in developing and field-testing practical and innovative solutions to development challenges that combine technical, cultural, psychological, behavioral economics, psychology, policy, and technological dimensions of sustainable development, and an intensive practical preparation of applied projects. The third (and fourth) semesters are dedicated to applied fieldwork and research in Israel or a developing country site. The program is led by senior TAU faculty from the social and engineering sciences with extensive experience in applied research on development.

For further information: <https://en-social-sciences.tau.ac.il/devcoun>

The International Program in Cyber, Politics and Government



As a global leader in cyber and technology, TAU is at the heart of innovation with leading researchers, research centers, and the center of the new "Smart Systems" national initiative. The Cyber, Politics and Government Program builds a bridge between the technology world and the field of corporate policy and strategy, critical issues for any organization's ability to adapt to the future world, which is rapidly evolving based on cyber technologies. The program is headed by Prof. Eviatar Matania, Former Director General of Israel National Cyber Directorate. The students in the program will acquire the critical tools for developing strategic planning, management and leadership in the challenging era of big data, cyber threats and new evolving technologies. Additionally, the students will gain the necessary understanding of cyber challenges on the societal, governmental, corporate and organizational levels to make educated decisions in risk management, compliance, budget, reputation, policy and strategy.

For further information: https://international.tau.ac.il/cyber_politics_government

The International Program in Social and Policy Aspects of Climate Change



This M.A program was successfully launched in 2023. The program focuses on the social context and policy aspects of the climate crisis. The program, the first of its kind in Israel and one of only a handful of similar programs worldwide, was initiated and developed in close consultation with TAU's new multidisciplinary Climate Centre established in 2020. The climate crisis is emerging as an existential global challenge in the 21st century, rapidly emerging as a systemic crisis, triggering a host of far-reaching economic, social, political, and ethical processes. The program is entirely dedicated to the social, cultural, and political dimensions of the climate crisis and its different social aspects: Sociology, Environmental Studies, Public Policy and much more. The program's intellectual prospect is forward-looking, emphasizing up-to-date, thoughtful creativity based on cutting edge science.

For further information: <https://en-social-sciences.tau.ac.il/climate>



EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

One of our main objectives is to educate and train the next generation of researchers, experts, policy makers and leaders in the fields of social sciences, using a multidisciplinary approach. To that end, we established the [Excellence Fellowship Program](#).

This program accepts a handful of outstanding students each year from the Dean's list of all Faculty's schools and departments. The program takes the students from B.A. to Ph.D. in 5 years to nurtures them to be the university's future excellent researchers and global leaders.

The program's academic founder is [Prof. Paul Romer](#), the 2018 Nobel Prize Laureate, who follows students' academic progress, meeting them several times a year.

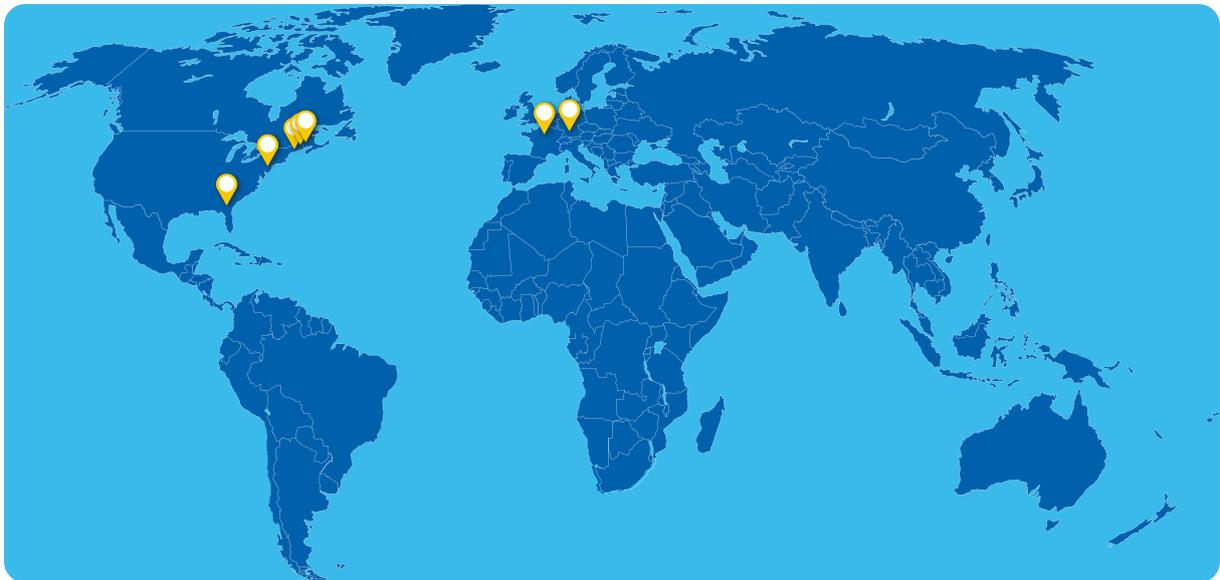
The program's leading values are inter-disciplinary, academic excellence, and the ability to lead rigorous social, academic and policy undertakings.

The program provides the students with a holistic package of financial and academic support to enable them to focus on their studies and research: full tuition / research scholarships; available funds for academic needs and travel; academic guidance and support; exposure to the best social scientists in the faculty and access to our international network of academic partners. As the research stage, the students will be mentored by IGS³ academic advisors' team, comprised of renowned academics from the world's leading universities. During their Ph.D., the students will spend at least one year in a prestigious graduate program abroad. The program was launched in 2022. Its third cohort joined the program on November 2024.



GUEST FACULTY AND VISITING SCHOLARS

IGS³ hosts 10-15 Guest Faculty and Visiting Scholars annually, who engage in an array of academic activities: teach full courses, participate in conferences, give seminars, hold meetings with faculty members and research students, and much more. These visitors are an essential part of our academic eco-system and play a key role in exposing our students to the international academic environment. We appreciate our guests' commitment and support, and especially cherish it this year.



*These are the **scholars** who have honored us with their wisdom and expertise (in order of arrival during the academic year):*



Prof. Charles Tenenbaum, Sciences-Po Lille (France)

his research foci are Contemporary Peacemaking by European Actors, International and European debates, international mediation and conflict resolution



Dr. Eldad Davidov, University of Cologne (Germany)

specializes on quantitative research methods and empirical social Research; cross-cultural comparisons; structural equation modeling and more.



Prof. Astrid von Busekist, Sciences-Po

Astrid von Busekist is Professor of political theory at Sciences Po, Paris. She is head of the political theory program at the graduate school, and has been visiting professor at the Goethe Universität Frankfurt (2020-2021), at New York University (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020), Tel Aviv University (2009-2011), and the Université Libre de Bruxelles (2001).



Prof. David L. Levi, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Prof. Levi Dr. is a Professor of Management in the College of Management at **UMass-Boston**. His academic work combines the fields of sustainability, business and climate change.



Dr. Smadar Cohen-Chen, University of Sussex

Dr. Cohen-Chen researches social and organizational issues by taking into consideration psychological factors and phenomena. Her research focuses on the role of emotions in decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership and management, and negotiations.



Prof. David Dillenberger, Penn University

His research focuses on microeconomic theory, and, in particular, on decision theory. He is mostly interested in models of non-expected utility, the economics of risk and time, and social preferences.



Prof. Sebastian Galiani, University of Maryland

Prof. Galiani is a world's leading economists. His wide research interests and activities range from Trade Economics, through Health economics and onto Development Economics and Applied Microeconomics. Prof. Galiani has worked as a consultant for United Nations, Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, and the governments of Argentina, Mexico, Panama and South Africa.



Prof. Yaakov Trope, Professor of Psychology at NYU (USA)

Professor Trope's research focuses on the cognitive, motivational and affective mechanisms underlying social judgments and decisions. His work examines psychological distance effects, namely, how temporal, spatial, and social distances affect the representations of objects and, thereby, predictions, evaluations, and choice.



Prof. Daniela Schiller, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Prof. Schiller's lab specializes in discovering the neural mechanisms underlying emotional control and flexibility. Her research team uses neuroimaging, pharmacology and psychophysiology to understand the neural mechanisms that make such emotional flexibility. The lab examines emotional processing in the normal brain and in patients with anxiety disorders and hope to promote new forms of treatment.



JOINT COURSES

We hosted two courses which were co-taught with international partners:

“Who is afraid of foreigners”



UNIVERSITY
OF COLOGNE

taught in the fall semester by [Prof. Anastasia Gorodzeisky](#) from the TAU department of Sociology and Anthropology, and [Prof. Eldad Davidov](#) of Cologne University.

“Aspects of Conflict Resolution: a comparative perspective: The Cyprus and Israeli-Palestinian cases”



taught at the University of Cyprus by [Dr. Nimrod Rosler](#) and [Dr. Boaz Hameiri](#), Heads of our International and Israeli MA Programs in Conflict Resolution and Mediation (respectively) and [Dr. Charis Psaltis](#) of Cyprus University. The course included students from both parts of Cyprus, Israeli and International students from TAU.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

One of our main objectives as an international school is to create, sustain, and broaden our network of academic partners. Collaborative activities vary from simple faculty and students' exchange, through joint conferences and research projects and up to collaborative degree agreements.

Collaborative Degree agreements



We offer our students the opportunity to earn two MA degrees, one from Tel Aviv University and the other from one of our partner university, in two years, spending one year at each university. Our partners are global leading universities, such as the School of Advanced International Studies at [Johns Hopkins University in Bologna](#) and [Sciences-Po Lille](#).

Our collaborative degree programs prepare students for global careers in public service, diplomacy, business, and nonprofit organizations, providing them the opportunity to experience two distinct academic, social, and cultural environments, develop a global perspective, so as to better understand the challenges facing Europe and the Middle East.



Other partners include the [European University Institute](#) in Italy: a leading research institute training mostly Ph.D. students. The [Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy](#) at the University of Toronto and [Collegio Carlo Alberto](#) in Torino.



RESEARCH AND RESEARCH CENTERS

The IGS³ supports the activity of the [Boris Mints Institute](#) for Strategic Policy Solutions to Global Challenges: a well-established and well-renowned research institute, focusing on interdisciplinary research, aimed at formulating practical policy solutions to current global challenges. The institute supports dozens of research students, both Israeli and international, and is best suited to serve as the infrastructure for supporting research students within the IGS³. The IGS³, assisted by the infrastructure of the Boris Mints Institute, enables us to increase the number of international research students at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Tel Aviv University.

IGS³ has strong research connections to [Archimedes – The Israeli Knowledge Center for Applied System Analysis](#). Archimedes is a national knowledge center that advances the field of applied systems analysis in Israel, with an emphasis on complex systems and their optimization using Integrated Assessment Models (IAM), multi-agent models, and more. The center's activity is closely intertwined with [IIASA](#), a world leading research institute for applied system analysis. The Center strives to encourage the implementation of policy solutions to reduce human footprint, improve the resilience of natural and human systems, and assist in achieving the SDGs Sustainable Development Goals.

One research center inaugurated this year is the [Center for Russian Studies](#), whose mission is to undertake interdisciplinary research to link developments in Russia's economy and society in recent decades to cultural and political factors. Though these factors are usually analyzed separately, it is important to understand how changes in one sphere determine changes in another. The Center for Russian Studies will engage in five areas of research: cultural transformation, transformation of social structure, political regime changes, transformation of economic institutions and foreign policy events that affected all abovementioned processes.

During the short period of the center's existence, an impressive database of sociological research on Russian society (1991-2024) was collected. Preliminary results were prepared and presented at TAU and IIASA (Vienna).

The academic director of the center is Prof. Itay Sened, and the center employs four researches from different disciplines.

International Research students

IGS³ supports international research students across the Faculty of Social Sciences: from visiting students who only spend a few months with us to full-time Ph.D. students and Post-Doctoral young researchers. We currently have 9 such students with us and are looking forward to becoming the academic home for more international research students next year. One of our prominent international PhD students, [Ms. Francesca Fassbejder](#), has just published an article in a top tier journal.



CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

During the past year we hosted, organized and participated in several significant conferences and workshops. These conferences enable us to showcase the remarkable research conducted by our faculty and students, create new connections and exchange ideas.

CSCR conference: Negotiations in Transformative Justice February 2024

The inaugural conference of the Center for the Study of Conflicts and their Resolution (CSCR) brought together scholars, practitioners and students to discuss leadership in processes of reconciliation, apologies' influence on transformative justice and foreseen obstacles for negotiated reconciliation. The conference hosted prominent figures in the field such as **Rev. Dr. Gary Mason**, Founder of "Rethinking Conflict" in Ireland, **Prof. Daniel Bar-Tal** of Tel Aviv University and **Dr. Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch** of Suffolk University.

BMI's 9th Annual conference: Regimes, Human Development and Sustainability May 2024

The Boris Mints Institute and IGS³ co-hosted this conference, that turned the academic spotlight to pressing contemporary issues: Return of Authoritarianism, Human Development, Welfare, Inequality and Climate Change. The conference included renowned internationally scholars such as **Prof. Astrid von Busekist**, Professor of Political Theory, Science Po; **Prof. Sebastian Galiani**, University of Maryland and **Prof. Eyal Zisser**, Vice Rector of Tel Aviv University.

CSCR conference: The Role of Victimhood in Conflict and Cooperation June 2024

The second CSCR conference continued carrying out the CSCR mission: sharing and advancing knowledge in the field of conflicts and their resolution. The topics that were discussed in this interesting conference were Victimization and Violence, The Enduring Effects of Collective Memories and Victimhood on Peace and Balancing Act: Navigating Competition and Compassion in Victimhood. Among the prominent speakers at the conference, we hosted **Prof. Arie Nadler**, Emeritus in the School of Psychological Science, Tel Aviv University; Dr. **Gilad Hirschberger**, Baruch Ivcher School of Psychology, Reichman University and **Prof. Nurit Shnabel**, School of Psychological Sciences, Tel Aviv University.

Center for Russian Studies workshop, in collaboration with IIASA June 2024

On July 17, 2024, the Center for Russian Studies (CRS) at Tel Aviv University and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) held a joint workshop in Laxenburg, Austria. The primary goal of the workshop was for CRS to present the initial steps in its core project – a multidisciplinary study of Russia’s political, social, cultural, and economic history over the past 30 years.

Hosted by IIASA, the event featured contributions from IASSA team members: Prof. Wolfgang Lutz, Dr. Sergei Schebov, Dr. Elena Rovenskaya, Dr. Anne Goujon. They explored opportunities for future collaboration between the institutions. Of particular interest to CRS is IIASA’s extensive research on Russian demography and the labor market. According to Prof. Itai Sened, IIASA’s substantial experience in modeling and forecasting social processes could greatly contribute to the successful development of the CRS project. Dr. Anne Goujon also enriched CRS’s approach by providing key methodological insights, which have since become a part of the center’s research framework.

Following the workshop, in August 2024, Dr. Elena Rovenskaya and the CRS team held a methodological seminar at Tel Aviv University. The seminar addressed various aspects of the project, particularly those concerning the resilience of natural and socioeconomic systems, as well as the interconnections between Russia’s economic development and environmental issues.

In addition to these two major events, we supported and organized the following events:

- December 2023: Special [Hanukkah tour](#) in Bnei-Brak for international students.
- May 2024: Hosting a group of [French BA students](#), as a part of our collaboration with the France-Israel Foundation.
- June 2024: [Data Analysis and Coding with Atlas.ti](#) - research workshop for students, organized and hosted by Max Goetz, a PhD student at the Conflict Resolution and Mediation program.
- July 2024: Hosting [JLIC Summer Visit](#) - 220 students from American and Canadian universities who came to TAU to learn about our programs for international students.



FUTURE PLANS

As a part of our aim of expanding the variety of our MA programs and connecting them to our research institutes, we are planning to launch a study track (to be later developed into a full MA) in Russian Studies. This track will offer students courses in four facets of Russian Studies: Economy, Society, History and Culture. This new track/program will be taught in collaboration with Frei University in Berlin.

