"We have established this institution of higher learning to contribute to the spiritual and cultural development of the State of Israel, as well as to strengthen that of Diaspora Jewry."

Prof. Pinkhos Churgin, Founding BIU President,
in a letter to David Ben-Gurion before the official opening ceremony of Bar-Ilan University in 1955
Bar-Ilan University is the fastest-growing institution of higher education in Israel. Those pursuing their BA, MA and PhD degrees on our award-winning campus just outside Tel Aviv and in our four regional colleges across Israel are joined by thousands more who are enrolled in certificate and enrichment programs, including the largest in-service teacher training program in Israel.

The sterling academic experience provided by Bar-Ilan University is what one would expect from any world-class institution, in Israel or elsewhere. But at Bar-Ilan we are not satisfied with merely being another great research university. We see our mission as something far more challenging and historic. We build character and leadership for Israel and the Jewish nation, based on the belief in the centrality of Israel to the Jewish world as its national homeland. We provide opportunities for our students and faculty to draw from traditional Jewish values to shape their deeds and destiny.

At Bar-Ilan our students learn to assume social responsibility. They are provided with an opportunity to become knowledgeable Jews, both formally, though our unique program which requires every student to take academic level Jewish studies courses, thereby grounding them in the basics of Judaism, and informally, through the vast multitude of Jewish experiences available on campus.

It is this ability to fuse a reverence for Jewish legacy and heritage with the rigors of academic study which makes Bar-Ilan University like no other.
Bar-Ilan University at a Glance*

• 23,400 Academic Degree students; 6,600 non-degree students = 30,000
• 1,800 faculty members, including 700 Senior Faculty Members and 1,100 Junior Faculty Members
• 8 Faculties: Mina & Everard Goodman Faculty of Life Sciences, Exact Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Social Sciences, Humanities, Jewish Studies, and Law
• 6 Interdisciplinary Graduate Study Programs in Brain Sciences, Nanotechnology, Hermeneutics & Cultural Studies, Conflict Management & Negotiation, Science, Technology & Society, and Gender Studies
• 52 Departments
• 8,000 Academic Courses
• 70 Research Centers and Institutes
• 80 International Academic Research Collaborations
• 77 Endowed Chairs
• 300 Laboratories
• 29 Libraries (including the Medical School) holding more than 1,000,000 titles
• 4 Regional Colleges under the academic supervision of BIU located across Israel in Acre, Safed, Jordan Valley, and Ashkelon
• 120,000 Alumni

*All figures are approximate and updated as of January 2015
Balancing Human and Natural Sciences: Our Formula for Success

Home to the largest Jewish studies faculty in the world, BIU is also pursuing cutting-edge scientific research, as seen in our Nanotechnology Institute, the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, and our School of Engineering. Leading a national initiative to stem the “brain drain” by repatriating 70 outstanding Israeli experimental scientists working abroad, Bar-Ilan was tapped by the Israeli government to launch Israel’s newest Medical School based in the northern Galilee, which opened its doors in October 2011.

Alongside this surge in the natural sciences, which has resulted in the University’s remarkable growth from two science-based faculties to four in a period of just ten years, Bar-Ilan is strategically focused on developing the human sciences as well – Jewish studies, social sciences, law, humanities and interdisciplinary graduate programs. The University is investing energy in recruiting new superstars, establishing centers of excellence and creating exciting academic programs that will attract a new breed of outstanding students who wish to concentrate on the humanistic disciplines. It is in their consonance and synergy that form the core values of Bar-Ilan University.
For the People of the Book, study is a way of life. Bar-Ilan encourages faculty and students to scale the peaks of the human intellect, to produce scientific breakthroughs, new insights and synergetic leaps of understanding. At the same time, Jewish content is a central facet in the life of the University, as is manifest in its 1,500 courses in diverse Jewish subjects taught across campus. Indeed, Bar-Ilan University has assumed a leadership role in bringing Jewish learning into the 21st century through its Israel Prize-winning “Responsa Project,” a CD-ROM that puts thousands of Jewish volumes from the Mishna to modern Responsa literature at the user’s fingertips.

The BIU Faculty of Jewish Studies is the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in the world, offering courses in just about all areas of Jewish study, among them Bible, Talmud, Rabbinic literature, Kabbala and Hassidism, Modern and Contemporary history, Holocaust studies, Jewish art, and many more. Major award-winning works include the Mikraot Gedolot, based on the unique Aleppo codex manuscript. In excavations at sites such as Philistine Gath, the Faculty’s dynamic team of archaeologists is bringing Biblical narrative alive, providing verifiable links to our ancient past and strengthening our identity with the Land of Israel. In addition, the Faculty brings Jewish learning and culture to the public through its special annual five-day Jewish Congress and weekly Bible lectures, and is a magnet for international students of the Bible, Jewish and Christian alike, especially those from the US and the Far East.

BIU’s Ludwig and Erica Jesselson Institute for Advanced Torah Studies uniquely enables BIU students to combine intense, high-level Torah scholarship with their academic training in diverse fields. The Institute’s Beit Midrash (for men) and Midrasha (for women) have produced thousands of graduates who provide exemplary Torah U’Madah models. Indeed, Torah and Science – once seemingly irreconcilable – are now sharing common ground in an innovative program, “Nitzotzot” (Hebrew for “sparks”), in which scientists, rabbinical scholars and PhD students examine scientific topics in the context of Jewish sources.
Science and Technology: Expanding New Boundaries

Bar-Ilan is home to a formidable cadre of exceptional researchers who are at the forefront of scientific discovery. The recipient of an unprecedented number of international grants, prizes and distinctions, the University’s research output is reflected in the ever-increasing rise in income generated through the vigorous performance of our researchers. Bar-Ilan scientists are making breakthroughs that improve life around the globe in areas such as:

- drug development
- nanotechnology & advanced materials
- medical research
- bio-engineering
- microscopy
- optics
- neuroscience and neurodegenerative diseases
- genetics
- immunology and cancer
- infectious diseases
- computer science
- communication
- energy
- security
- cognitive sciences
- cyber security and cryptography

A profound commitment to advancing scientific excellence lies at the very heart of the Bar-Ilan University mission. Physicists, chemists, computer scientists, mathematicians, engineers and life scientists are opening up new horizons in their own fields, while participating in dynamic, interdisciplinary projects undertaken by the University's outstanding research centers.

Attracting top scientists to its ranks from around the world, and maintaining some eighty global academic partnerships with key North American, European and Asian institutions, Bar-Ilan University’s keen ability to build bridges and “go global” is highly notable. The University links Israel’s science-based spirit of innovation to the international scientific agenda, demonstrating not only its impressive ability to create new solutions to problems affecting all mankind, but also, its inherent desire to make the world a better place.
Three Outstanding Research Centers that are Making a Difference

The Brain – Exploring its Mysteries
The Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center brings together researchers from across the sciences, all in one dedicated building, to understand the mysteries of the brain. They study the full range of brain phenomena – from adult and child behavior, to the detailed neural machinery of cognitive processes, to the analysis of the function of vital molecules within nerve cells; and they employ the full gamut of techniques – personal interviews, electrophysiology, molecular biology, abstract mathematical modeling, and many others. The Gonda Center is home to the world’s most comprehensive program of Language-Brain studies, and internationally-acclaimed leaders in the study of depression, suicide prevention, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The instrumentation of the Gonda Center is impressive, housing cutting-edge devices for brain research which are unique in Israel, such as the MEG (Magneto Encephalograph), which provides critical data to researchers studying perception, voluntary action, memory and language, and is used for the early diagnosis of epilepsy for surgery candidates. The Center makes these diagnostic services available to hospitals around the country.

Nanotechnology – A Research Powerhouse
The Bar-Ilan Institute for Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials (BINA), drawing a large number of its young faculty members from abroad, educates Israel’s next generation of nanoscience professionals. BINA researchers collaborate with academic and industrial experts in Israel and abroad on nano-based approaches to energy, magnetism, optics, clean tech and biomedicine.

Housed in the Leslie and Susan Gonda (Goldschmied) Nanotechnology Triplex, with 40 cutting-edge laboratories, as well as state-of-the art “scientific service” facilities for electron microscopy, nanofabrication, surface analysis, and fluorescence and magnetic measurement, BINA’s remarkable productivity – in publications, grants, patents, and in the creation of successful start-ups from basic science breakthroughs – have made it highly sought after as an R&D partner. In addition to academic collaborations with some of the world’s top research institutes, BINA currently partners with leading multi-national corporations including GM, Merck, Phillips, Siemens and IBM.

Engineering – Energized!
Bar-Ilan University’s School of Engineering is a leader in high-tech research and development. The School seeks to strengthen the technological infrastructure of the State of Israel by producing top-quality engineers who advance cutting-edge scientific research and pioneering technologies for the benefit of humankind.

Despite the School’s relatively young age, BIU engineering faculty members have already been awarded close to 100 patents. School faculty have path-blazed such innovations as a new encryption technique which impedes eavesdropping, an optical heartbeat monitor which was selected as one of Israel’s top 45 greatest inventions of all time, a bionic eye which may one day enable people blind from birth to see. From medicinal leeches which show us the mechanisms of neuronal growth in the nervous system to “hacker-proof” robust codes for reliable and secure communication channels, the engineering team members have demonstrated creativity, originality, and vision in the research agendas they have pursued.
Bringing Medicine to the Galilee

The Bar-Ilan University School of Medicine in the Galilee forms the heart of a new academic and technologically-oriented community that is revitalizing Jewish presence in the north while ensuring a higher standard of living for all Israel’s citizens.

Although its establishment in 2011 makes this the youngest of Israel’s five medical institutions, the School has already won renown, placing second in the psychiatry and gynecology exam scores at the national level. Employing the most advanced teaching methods, including a unique training course for doctors who run the School’s clinical program in affiliate hospitals, theoretical knowledge is transformed into practice by students during their clinical work in area hospitals and community health clinics. In 2014 the first class of students completed the School’s three-year clinical program, following three years of pre-med studies abroad. They are now starting their one-year hospital internships. Meanwhile BSc grads enrolled in the School’s four-year program are pursuing clinical work in hospitals in the north, including two in Nazareth.

Faculty members recruited from countries around the world are among the top scientists in their fields. Indeed, a number of these returning scientists are recipients of prestigious awards for their medical research in microbiology, genetics and breast cancer, among others. The School’s innovative approach to disease-targeted research provides realistic and practicable solutions to specific human illnesses, such as cancer, infectious and age-related diseases, while it also engages in interdisciplinary research in the humanities, medicine and public health. For instance, the School’s Project Raphael provides seed money and academic support to enable local community and health organizations to develop viable, self-sustaining programs.

Community involvement is a prime directive of the medical school, which is determined to improve the quality of life for local residents. As part of an initiative to provide youth in the north with hands-on lab experience and inspire them to pursue a career in science, faculty members supervise high school juniors conducting a scientific project in lieu of a matriculation exam. In the summer of 2014, 140 medical students volunteered in 46 organizations in the north as part of the School’s Community Outreach Course. Within the course framework, BIU medical students also ran health education workshops in order to raise awareness of juvenile diabetes, skin cancer, dehydration and other issues. And, in what has become an annual event, the School brings over 500 children aged three to six to its Teddy Bear Hospital, designed to minimize fear of hospitals and medical treatment.

*Science Night* at the BIU School of Medicine in the Galilee
BIU researchers know that understanding the big picture is vital for Israelis. Not only must they continue to cope with a conflict that is not going away anytime soon, they must also understand this within a context of regional turbulence and revolution. Programs in Conflict Resolution and Middle-Eastern studies are among those that address this problem, while the University’s School of Communication aims to actively join the fight against Israel’s demonization. Bar-Ilan’s Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies is an essential think tank focusing on Israel’s immediate and long-term security interests, keeping them at the top of the public and global agendas.

Cyber-security is a main concern in today’s age of cyber-attacks. BIU mathematicians, cryptologists, computer security experts, and engineers are developing research technology designed to battle this threatening phenomena. BIU artificial intelligence experts are contributing to the development of a computerized system that makes it harder for would-be terrorists to break through a facility’s defensive countermeasures. Researchers are also working on ground-breaking systems for security-related applications, such as multi-robot patrolling, creating new modes of cryptography and inventing satellite-based remote sensing systems that provide critical data unavailable through other methods.

Bar-Ilan psychologists have developed pioneering treatments focusing on the rehabilitation of Israelis suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the wake of terrorist attacks or war. As a result of these new and specific treatments, Israel is a model for PTSD treatment all over the world, and BIU experts are invited to contribute their knowledge at the hotspots of the world.
BIU Influence and Impact

BIU is the venue for over 400 conferences a year on diverse topics ranging from bioethics to gender studies, from stem-cell research to Jewish education, drawing scholarly attention at the national and international levels. In addition, Bar-Ilan University has become the hub where some of the world’s highest-ranking statesmen come to deliver major policy addresses, such as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s famous “Bar-Ilan speeches” which were broadcast all over the world. The President of the State of Israel, Ministers, Members of Parliament, as well as prominent leaders from leading businesses and professions in Israel and around the globe, have used the prestigious BIU platform to make their case to the people of Israel and the world.

Bar-Ilan hosts a multitude of frameworks which are significant conduits for educating key policy and decision-makers about the University’s unique blend of knowledge, tradition and values. Among them, the Ambassadors’ Forum is designed to brief the international diplomatic corps about critical current events affecting Israel and the world-at-large; business forums feature captains of Israeli industry; and law forums host distinguished members of the legal community who speak on a broad spectrum of topics.

With over 120,000 graduates, many of BIU’s alumni today are eminent leaders in the financial, industrial, educational and public sectors, and in society as a whole, conveying the spirit of education, moderation and tolerance they have acquired within the University’s gates in all their areas of activity.

“Our goal is to make Bar-Ilan University a thriving intellectual, spiritual and cultural Jewish hub and home for our citizens and for our brethren from around the world.”

BIU President
Rabbi Prof. Daniel Hershkowitz

In addition to hosting prestigious conferences and guest speakers from around the world, BIU academicians have been invited to head and to address prominent United Nations organizations on women’s rights, education and political affairs.

BIU President Rabbi Prof. Daniel Hershkowitz and a delegation from Ibero-America meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican, where the Pope was awarded the University’s Award of Distinction.

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Improving Israeli Society
by Cultivating a Commitment
to Community Service

Compassion, justice and service to others are at the heart of Jewish life and law. At Bar-Ilan these values are core to the University’s agenda, and are encouraged and affirmed, through example and practice, in its students’ and faculty’s activities. Among them, BIU’s ten legal clinics (a uniquely mandatory requirement for all law students) instill a strong sense of social responsibility in the country’s future law practitioners. The clinics specialize in environmental practice and policy, legal aid for women and family, civil legal aid and practice, criminal law, mediation, legal assistance for the disabled, Jewish law, legal aid for Holocaust survivors, criminal justice prosecution, and counseling and legislation. The Faculty of Law is at the forefront in advocacy work and for actually getting laws passed in the Israeli Parliament.

The Louis and Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work combines high-level teaching and research activity with close involvement in practice, government ministries, volunteer and public organizations. The Psychology Services Clinic offers the public a unique clinical environment in which therapy is informed by advanced research, among them the trauma and loss clinic, established in the wake of Israel’s Operation Protective Edge, which took place during the summer of 2014.

BIU’s Religious-Secular Dialogue Program gives expression to the differences between people while teaching them to respect the “other” and is now expanding outside the campus to include school teachers and youth in community centers across the country, while the Division for Science Activities for Youth runs special year-long science programs that benefit underprivileged youngsters throughout the country, and holds science-enrichment camps for neighborhood children every summer.

The University provides assistance to handicapped former IDF soldiers who suffer from head trauma at the Rehabilitation Center in Jaffa, in cooperation with the Ministry of Defense. The Department of Optometry provides the public with free eye exams through its Optometry Clinic. The MA Program in Applied Criminology requires its students to apply the concepts, theories and methods they learn in class to prisons, the Police Force, youth-at-risk intervention programs, and courts of law. Reaching out to every member of the population, including the intellectually disabled (ID), the Pinkhos Churgin School of Education’s one-of-a-kind Otzmot (Empowerment) Program enables ID students (such as Down’s syndrome) to study towards an academic degree.

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Campus Life

The Bar-Ilan campus is the scene of animated interaction between students, faculty, administration and visitors attending meetings, conferences, lectures, and the like.

The University’s state-of-the-art Friedman Student Information & Service Center attends to the students’ every administrative need. The Gradel & Weisfeld Day Care Centre, geared for infants from three months to three years, provides quality, affordable on-site care for the children of Bar-Ilan students.

The Office of the Campus Rabbi organizes a wide range of activities enriching spiritual and religious life on campus, among them special Shabbatot, evening Torah lessons, and social events during the Jewish holidays. The weekly “cholent” with Torah get-togethers on the sprawling lawns of the campus are a big draw to religious and secular alike. For the ever-burgeoning population of new olim students on and about campus, BIU’s new “Anglo” rabbi provides weekly Torah lessons and answers to halakhic questions – all in English.

BIU’s Office of the Dean of Students promotes the welfare of the students on campus, providing a range of services designed to respond to personal, economic and social problems. The Sybil Wigdor Social Involvement Unit helps some 1,000 students with physical, medical and learning disabilities to fulfill their academic potential as independently as possible. Together with the Student Union, the Office operates frameworks for students’ volunteerism and involvement in the community.
Bar-Ilan University’s scientific innovation is continually enhanced by the inbound and outbound movement of our scientists, scholars and students. The vibrant energy brought forth by postdoctoral students who join our research teams on campus from institutions abroad, as well as those who return “home” to BIU, is thriving – bringing with it not only more academic excellence but also a sophistication and cosmopolitanism that is essential to the development of our world-class institution.

BIU continues to be a hub for new immigrants who find the supportive staff and family-like atmosphere of the university particularly inviting. Well over 1,000 students from around the world color the main campus. These students choose to major in any of the 52 departments offered among the faculties and matriculate into the well-established Hebrew-language learning frameworks. Recently, BIU has responded to the needs of our students by opening several undergraduate and postgraduate programs taught in the English language. Under the guidance of professors from Israel and around the world, participants enjoy dynamic class discussions and diverse learning experiences to compete on an international level.

In summer 2014, Bar-Ilan opened its new International Office for Academic Affairs as the central unit for initiating and coordinating its study programs and courses, as well as for enhancing BIU’s participation in multinational exchange programs such as Erasmus Plus and Euraxess. More new English-language programs will be opened in the coming years, as the University plans to open its International School in summer 2015.

Our International MBA program continues its proven track record in translating the special qualities which have fueled the Israeli business and entrepreneurial machine into a global academic program. Through a grant from the Israeli Council for Higher Education, the program now also welcomes an impressive cohort of students from China. This initiative, including many new courses and a study tour in China, places BIU at the forefront of producing the next generation of Start-Up Nation innovators.

BIU’s outstanding English-language programs in the Humanities: the Shaindy Rudoff MA in Creative Writing, an MA in Linguistics in Clinical Research, and a new MA in Literary Translation, are also attracting students. Finally, BIU’s renowned Conflict Resolution Program recently launched a new Summer School, which draws students interested in gaining first-hand knowledge in the conflict management and resolution aspects of the Middle East.
The Bar-Ilan University campus spans 140 acres in the heart of central Israel. It includes 80 modern classroom buildings, 300 advanced laboratories and 70 research centers and institutes.

Bar-Ilan’s artfully landscaped campus, with its many attractive shaded seating areas, has rightfully won the University Israel’s “most beautiful” campus award and has been officially recognized by the Israel Ministry of Environmental Protection as a Green Campus. The campus is the scene of animated interaction between students, faculty, administration and visitors attending meetings, conferences, and lectures at both the historic south and new north campuses. From humble beginnings with a single building on the original campus, the University today boasts some of the most interesting and innovative architecture and gardens in the State of Israel, particularly on its new north campus, which has effectively doubled the size of the University’s physical plant.

The campus expansion was developed according to a master plan including designated interconnected roads, gates, parks and buildings, each designed by a different architect to lend it a sophisticated and eclectic look. An innovative, free campus shuttle service ferries students and faculty from one end of the campus to the other.
Bar-Ilan University: Potential to Change the World

Bar-Ilan University delivers top-level academic education to its students, but it doesn’t stop there. Understanding Jewish culture and Zionist ideals is an integral part of every student’s formal and informal training, out of the conviction that a person whose education is grounded in values will bear a greater impact in every sphere of his or her world. It is this stalwart creed which guides the University as it embraces rigorous intellectual discipline and pursuit of scientific excellence with concern for its students’ personal growth and wellbeing.

Together with this, BIU takes on the mantle of globalization, providing our unique brand of higher education and research to students, scientists and academe from around the world.

At Bar-Ilan, we are proving daily that Jewish values not only coexist with academic and research excellence, but that the synergy between them has the potential to positively impact on Israel and Clal Israel.

Forging the way for both Judaism and democracy to not only survive, but thrive, is something that BIU’s academe and scholars are uniquely capable of doing. This ideological bridge-building is vital not only for ensuring Israel’s physical survival, but also for strengthening Jewish identity, national resilience, and support for the Jewish State around the world.

Indeed, in the Faculty of Law it was decided that one third of its researchers should be working on questions related to the Jewish character of the State. Such academic activities draw upon Jewish law and philosophy to provide guidance on “hot button” issues in Israeli society such as minority and women’s rights, and also to give a Jewish perspective to basic legal issues such as contracts, torts and property law.
“Eretz Israel for the people of Israel in accordance with the Law of Israel...these are not three separate principles, but three revelations of a single unity - the complete Judaism.”

Rabbi Meir Bar-Ilan, in whose memory Bar-Ilan University was named, coined this motto of the World Mizrachi religious Zionist movement.