**Preparation material for group discussion with the Commandant of the IDF Colleges**

**Hello,**

In the coming days, I will request the pleasure of your company for a group introduction and discussion.

The main objectives of this conversation are getting to know you, our common traits and assisting me in creating a situational assessment of the IDF Colleges and the INDC in particular.

I would appreciate your assistance in filling out this questionnaire so that I will be able to better prepare for our meeting. Please fill out this page and hand it in to the head of the International Fellows desk 48 hours ahead of our meeting.

**This page will only be read by me!**

Sincerely, Amir Baram

**When, in your opinion, do you believe that the Commandant of the Colleges has to take part in an INDC activity \ the Plenum?**

* - The Commander’s Hour is an integral part of bringing real and current world activities into the classroom setting.
* - During visits from senior visitors. I would assume this interaction would encourage future visits.

**What should be the Commandants responsibility towards the colleges that are not under his direct command? What do you believe should be his prioritization?**

* - Encouraging interactions amongst students. Maybe hosting events that might encourage dialogue across the fields.

**How do you see the existing tension that lays between the curriculum and your personal time?**

* - Yes, but no more than would be expected. However, for the Israelis, I see tension with the long commutes. I see tension with “this year is about spending time with your families” but then expecting readings and works to be done during this family time after, in some cases, a long drive home. Maybe change the messaging to slower operational tempo permitting less stressed interactions with families?

**Looking at the method used to teach in the colleges, do you see executive learning as a method that suits everyone?**

* - No, not everyone but it is the best of them. At our age, most of us don’t need hand holding for education.

**Regarding the way students are taught in the colleges, what is your opinion about the balance between: teaching the tools in order for the students to inquire alone and teaching the information directly?**

* - In a masters level program, I wouldn’t expect the instructor to re-teach the readings from the night before. The classroom should build on those readings for deeper discussions. Suzy and Dima are, hands down, the best at this. Suzy was especially great at bringing in real world legal examples to enhance the discussions based off the readings. Dima was especially good at teasing out interactions from the students (“what did you think about X’s point on strategy”) for follow on discussions.

**What is the right balance between explicit and tacit knowledge?**

* - For many the political science basics, the explicit, aren’t known. So, Ben Dor and Dima’s sessions are a must to build that foundation. From there, the more complex and difficult tacit discussions can be developed. Dima’s sessions are a good example of this where a lot of the final discussions built upon the foundation he set up in the beginning. I also enjoyed the MG’s follow on sessions which took it even further. He was able to bring real world application to the foundation that Dima set up in the beginning. This is the greatest asset of the team teaching between the two….from theory to real world.

**Regarding the commandants position, how do you find the tension between being a commander and being an instructor?**

* - I think this must be a difficult task. Obviously with good staffs, it is manageable. I would also add that the ability to bring in current examples to the classroom, as the MG did during the exercise (Commander’s Hour and the tour during the exercise) were fantastic.

**Administrative issues:**

* - The ISMO team is to be commended. Toby did an excellent job in managing the summer gap and transition. Ido has taken it to the next level with support that is timely and of high quality. The biggest challenge for them, I’ve noticed, is getting Hebrew briefings to them in time to translate. This might be impossible, especially for senior visitors, so I’d suggest that all hebrew briefings be translated after the fact and loaded on the website (for the tours, as an example).

**Anything else? Whatever you deem important**:

* Again, Dima and Suzy are the example of instruction that all should hope to model themselves after. The advantage of MABAL’s obvious high level of notoriety is that getting high caliber instructors should be easy. Maintaining this high standard should be a top goal for the program. The relationship with the university is key in selecting the most competent instructors possible.