



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS

U.S. Affiliate of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists

President Ellen M. Granberg
The George Washington University
1918 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052
Via email to: president@gwu.edu

November 3, 2023

Dear President Granberg,

We stand anxious and concerned with the Jewish students at GW in the aftermath of Hamas supporters voicing their enthusiasm for the rape, torture, and murder of innocent civilians by projecting pro-terror messages on the outside of their institution (see images below). These messages included references to the infamous genocidal call to make the land of Israel judenrein “from the River to the Sea” by ethnically cleansing Jews.



What is troubling is that the group responsible felt that there was a receptive atmosphere on GW’s campus that it could broadcast messages with the intended effect of terrorizing Jewish students on campus. The university itself allowed its building to be used as the backdrop and platform, giving a soapbox to organizations that call for the worldwide murder of all Jews at a time when a wave of global hate is gathering more momentum every day. Maybe this view was fostered by the fact that in the days after the atrocities of October 7, 2023, a rally glorifying those who committed heinous war crimes, was permitted on the GW campus.

We wonder whether your presidency would tolerate calls for genocide against other ethnic groups with the same level of ambivalence, as mere disagreements of opinion. Once students and

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the public become aware that GW is a safe haven for antisemitic actions, further vitriol is not far behind. History shows again and again this progression, beginning with delegitimization and denigration, devolving into acts of aggression against property, and ending up in violence against Jewish people. At other college campuses, this violence has already begun, with Jewish students screamed at, shoved, beaten, and barricaded in campus libraries.

Undoubtedly, there should be robust academic debate at a university, but the bounds of free speech and debate end where there are calls for violence, calls for genocide, and calls for the dissolution of the Jewish homeland. Groups like Students for Justice in Palestine do not look for opportunities to build bridges and mutual understanding; they purposefully work to undermine dialogue through “de-normalization”; many chapters have the explicit goal of intimidating Jewish students so that they feel unsafe voicing any public support for the only Jewish state.

GW is teaching all students that their administration will not protect them. This is deeply surprising and also sad. A clear message - backed up with action - must be sent to Jewish students and their parents that they are safe to attend GW and that they will not be subjected to hate speech, hate conduct, or the threat of physical violence against property or person. The [statement](#) provided on October 25, 2023 is simply insufficient, as it does not describe which of the university’s policies were violated, whether the perpetrators have been found or what action will be taken.

Condemnation of violent rhetoric is a given, but insufficient. The AAJLJ expects GW leadership to take robust and swift action to control antisemitism on campus. Left unchecked, it will inevitably lead to physical violence against Jewish students - violence that your administration has been explicitly warned about in detail and has seen play out on other campuses.

To that end, we have formulated the enclosed Fighting Antisemitism On Campuses Effectively (F.A.C.E.) Plan, the implementation of which will demonstrate that GW is committed to ensuring that its Jewish students can feel safe on campus once more.

We are available to discuss this matter with you and to provide what assistance we can.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Garson

President

cc: Caroline Laguerre-Brown (DECE)

Encl/s

F.A.C.E.
FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM ON CAMPUSES EFFECTIVELY

- 1.** Ensure the university's non-discrimination policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion. Adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, including all of its examples (collectively, the "IHRA definition"), as official institutional policy for identifying and investigating alleged incidents of antisemitic discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and other conduct. Ensure that all faculty, staff, campus security, and DEIB offices (or other offices whose responsibility it is address issues of discrimination) are educated on the IHRA definition and understand that the IHRA definition is already the law of the land in the United States - under Executive Order 13899 (Combating Antisemitism), the IHRA definition is to be applied by the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies investigating alleged antisemitic discrimination on campus.
- 2.** Establish official institutional policies (i) recognizing that, for the majority of Jewish individuals, Zionism is a core aspect of their Jewish cultural, ethnic, and religious identity and (ii) affirming any discrimination on the basis of "Zionism" shall be recognized, and treated in the same manner, as discrimination against Jews or members of any other religious group, as per the university's non-discrimination policy. Ensure that the full range of Jewish identity, including Zionism, is represented in DEIB-related programming.
- 3.** Ensure that appropriate disciplinary action is pursued against any and all students, faculty and staff engaging in antisemitic conduct within the IHRA definition, or other conduct prohibited by the university's non-discrimination policies, applicable to violative actions against Jews.
- 4.** Closely scrutinize and document the activities of those groups that have been deemed presumptively to be hate organizations (including, but not limited to, Students for Justice in Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, and Within Our Lifetime) to the extent permitted by law. Revoke or deny university recognition to these organizations and their chapters on campus such that they are ineligible to access university funding or resources.
- 5.** Disclose all funds received by the university from foreign sources, the purpose or conditions attached, and confirm that no such funds have been used to influence the university's curricula, faculty decisions, and overall governance, and that none of such monies have been used to fund any student organizations.
- 6.** Develop and mandate a semester-long course and faculty training program, to be maintained in perpetuity, that focuses on the Holocaust, expulsion of Jews from Arab lands, the Black & Jewish alliance during the civil rights movement, as well as IHRA and modern forms of antisemitism. The course should foster productive discourse, constructive debate, and fact interrogation.
- 7.** Conduct a thorough evaluation of the university's security resources and implement a comprehensive plan to ensure the safety of Jewish students and that events and meetings relating to Judaism (including Zionism) are able to proceed peacefully, free from agitation, and without significant disruption. This plan should also address the curbing of violent speech, glorification of terrorism, and the curbing of disruptive rallies, safeguarding students' free academic engagement and campus movement. Limit demonstrations and gatherings exclusively to those that adhere strictly to the university's policies and codes of conduct, and allow only individuals affiliated with the university to attend.
- 8.** Implement security protocols, requiring valid government issued identification, in accordance with universally accepted security measures, for any student or faculty that enters university property. This includes limiting dormitory and university building access to students and other university-authorized individuals.
- 9.** Sanction student organizations or professors if the university's logo (or other indications of official school sponsorship or endorsement) is used on any materials, messages, or events that conflict with university's codes of conduct or policies, including but not limited to, non-discrimination policies, as implemented above.