
AJC ACTION PLAN FOR
Confronting Campus Antisemitism

A Toolkit for University Administrators

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University leadership has a uniquely important role to play in addressing antisemitism on college campuses and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Jewish students, faculty, and staff. [American Jewish Committee](#)¹ (AJC), the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people, maintains that in addition to meeting pressing immediate needs of Jewish campus citizens, real change requires a sustained commitment to improving the learning and living environment for Jewish community members. Therefore, AJC has created this concise action plan containing **immediate**, **near-term**, and **long-term** action steps to improve the campus atmosphere.

This action plan closely follows the [U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#)², which charts a broad and ambitious series of action steps spanning sectors and communities, in response to the threat posed by antisemitism to the integrity of our shared institutions, including higher education. AJC experts are available to work in partnership with university administrators to help build an atmosphere more resilient against rising Jew-hatred. We look forward to working with you. Please be in touch with Dr. Sara Coodin, AJC Director of Academic Affairs, at coodins@ajc.org, for more information about anything in this action plan or to set up a meeting.

¹AJC.org

²www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf

What administrators can do right now:

Prioritize campus physical security. Ensure that policies are in place to protect Jewish students, faculty, and staff, with clear, appropriate enforcement protocols. The Hamas terror attack on October 7, 2023, has resulted in anti-Israel campus protests escalating in intensity and scope, and threats to Jewish student safety have risen dramatically at many schools. It is the university's responsibility to anticipate these new security needs so that Jewish students, faculty, and staff are safe and feel safe on campus, and Jewish programming and facilities are protected. If your school requires additional security reinforcements, AJC can help by connecting you with the DOJ's [Community Relations Service](#)³.

Reassert and enforce university codes of conduct. Anti-Israel campus protests have become increasingly unruly and even violent in recent weeks. Message boards and social media are being weaponized to threaten and intimidate Jewish students. Administrators need to take this moment to communicate publicly and clearly the rules that govern protests on campus, and underscore the consequences of threatening and intimidating Jewish students online or through other forums, and be prepared to enforce rules without equivocation.

Make clear that students and faculty will be held to account. When the university's guidelines and professional standards are violated, including harassment, intimidation, threats, and unprotected hate speech, ensure that the proper disciplinary measures are enforced. Now is the time to publicly announce the process for filing discrimination and harassment complaints, and ensure that complaints will be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Issue a statement reaffirming the university's commitment to countering antisemitism when students or faculty express points of view that devolve into hate speech.

Connect directly with Jewish students. Jewish students need to know that their concerns are heard and addressed. Work with AJC and campus organizations like Hillel and Chabad to engage with a diverse group of Jewish students to understand how situations like the Hamas-Israel war, and increased anti-Zionist/Israel rhetoric on campus, is impacting their sense of safety, belonging, and overall experience on campus.

Show up in support of Jewish students on campus. AJC is helping organize and sponsor Shabbat dinners both on and off campus. Make an effort to attend a local Shabbat dinner to demonstrate concern and care for the Jewish campus community.

³www.justice.gov/crs

What administrators can do in the coming year (2023/24 and 2024/25 academic cycles):

Adopt and use the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\) Working Definition of Antisemitism](#)⁴. Adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism will provide a clear framework for understanding the many manifestations of antisemitism on college campuses nationwide, including debates about Israel's right to exist and Zionism. Only by identifying antisemitism in its most potent forms can universities effectively combat it. The IHRA Working Definition offers contemporary, practical examples of anti-Zionist forms of antisemitism, and explicitly notes that criticism of Israeli policy is not antisemitic. Commit to incorporating the IHRA Working Definition, adopted by 43 countries (including the United States), into your campus' diversity and inclusion programming, and take steps to ensure that it shapes the research and educational priorities on your campus.

Recenter the conversation about the Middle East back to a place of fact-based exchange. It is essential that universities foster dialogue about the histories of Israel and Zionism and their relationship to the Jewish people's self-determination, to counter the misinformation that abounds on social media, percolates at protests, and can be heard in heated campus exchanges. In addition to serving as a resource for up-to-date information on the war between Israel and Hamas, AJC offers education and training opportunities to help administrators re-center campus conversations that include:

[Project Interchange](#)⁵ delegations to Israel for academic administrators.

AJC/Hillel International's [Second University Presidents Summit](#)⁶ in 2024.

Training within the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) space that educates about Jewish history, Jewish identity, and antisemitism.

Reliable educational resources about Israel, Zionism, and antisemitism, like AJC's [Translate Hate](#)⁷ glossary, to unpack antisemitic rhetoric and address areas of cognitive dissonance.

Academic exchange programs with Israeli universities, which AJC would be happy to discuss with your institution.

Convene a task force to combat antisemitism. Create a task force comprised of Jewish students, faculty, and campus leaders, that reports directly to senior university leadership, with an actionable list of initiatives and a clear timeline for implementation.

⁴AJC.org/WorkingDefinition

⁵AJC.org/ProjectInterchange

⁶AJC.org/UniversityLeadershipLearnNewTools

⁷AJC.org/TranslateHate

Long-term action items (within the next 5 academic years):

□ **Commit to disrupting anti-Zionist echo chambers on campus** by fostering intellectual diversity in academic programs and departments. Universities have a vital role to play in ensuring that multiple perspectives about Israel and Zionism are represented on campus to discuss the complex realities of the Middle East.

□ **Adopt innovative hiring practices to ensure viewpoint diversity** in university departments, schools, and programs. Universities should also be willing to engage directly with departments and programs that are resistant to fostering academic exchange that includes diverse, fact-based perspectives about Israel and Zionism.

□ **Support research that is committed to understanding the historical sources of antisemitism** and its relationship to other forms of extremism and hate. The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism makes clear that there is no combating antisemitism in a vacuum. One of the most important ways to confront antisemitism is to incentivize and elevate scholarship that examines the interlocking histories of various hatreds, including antisemitism, anti-Black racism, homophobia, and Islamophobia. University leaders have a vital role to play in ensuring that research directors address antisemitism as part of a focused and broad coalition effort to address hate.

□ **Elevate the voices of Jewish, Israeli, Arab, and Palestinian** students, faculty, and community members who are actively pursuing sustained dialogue and mutual understanding. Often, the voices that are quieter and less extreme have little visibility on campus compared to those who actively seek attention through inflammatory rhetoric. Find ways to include voices that seek to engage in constructive dialogue, and support their efforts.

□ **Work with interfaith and intergroup specialists**, including chaplains, to create pathways towards engaging together on challenging topics. Create forums for students to engage in ways that move conversations towards cultivating empathy and building bridges that support living together in community.

□ **Elevate role models from the Jewish campus community**, including strong student leaders, outstanding cultural life directors, and innovative faculty. As with any minoritized community, Jewish role models foster a sense of belonging and purpose for Jews on campus. Emphasize the importance of actively recruiting scholars who exemplify leadership and mentorship in their intellectual and pedagogical work. Find ways to elevate the work of outstanding Jewish student leaders, and ensure they have a place within campus initiatives designed to support marginalized communities.

[American Jewish Committee \(AJC\)](#)⁸ is the global advocacy organization for the Jewish people. With headquarters in New York, 25 offices across the United States, 14 overseas posts, as well as partnerships with 38 Jewish community organizations worldwide, AJC's mission is to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel, and to advance human rights and democratic values in the United States and around the world.