

Best Practices

Overcoming Anti-Israel Challenges on Campus



StandWithUs

SAID OFF
Legal

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CAMPUS

Know Your Rights!

Record evidence.

Challenge what you think are anti-Semitic
or anti-Israel activities.

Require that your school's
administration follow its own rules.

Ask for help. We're here to help you.

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**WHILE WE HOPE THAT THIS
BOOKLET IS HELPFUL,
YOU DO NOT NEED TO
FIGURE OUT HOW TO
RESPOND TO ANTI-ISRAEL
OR ANTI-SEMITIC
ACTIVITY ON YOUR OWN**

WHEN IN DOUBT, REACH OUT

**legal@standwithus.com
campus@standwithus.com**

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Bringing a Speaker to Campus

STEP 1.

Have you ever been prevented from bringing a pro-Israel speaker to campus?

Most universities have policies that prohibit discrimination against individuals or student organizations on the basis of race, national origin, religion, and other protected identities.

Raise these school policies with your school administration, including the Events Planning Office and the Office of Student Affairs, in an email or meeting.



To search for your school's policies, try searching for the terms: “discrimination policy”; “non-discrimination”; “bias incident”; “student conduct code”; “student rights and responsibilities”; or “reporting an incident.” **If you need help finding your school's policies, or to learn how the reporting procedures work, contact legal@standwithus.com.**

STEP 2.

Keep all evidence!

- Make sure to keep ALL email correspondence from the administration or student government about planning the event, even if it seems irrelevant.
- Take screenshots of social media posts.
- Follow up meetings and phone calls with an email, copying everyone present, summarizing what was discussed and anything that was agreed upon.

STEP 3.

Reach out to the StandWithUs Legal Department for help.

If you believe your event was not funded, received less funding than similar events promoting a different viewpoint, was denied use of campus facilities, or if the school imposed unreasonable security fees or other procedures due to the pro-Israel position advocated at the event, you may have a discrimination claim.

Contact **legal@standwithus.com** for help.





Anti-Israel/Anti-Semitic Speaker Coming to Campus

Extremist speakers often engage in hate speech when sharing their anti-Israel and anti-Jewish views.

Hate speech attacks a person or group because of an immutable characteristic, such as ethnicity, religion, national origin, race, disability, or gender. Hate speech is generally constitutionally protected, but it may violate school rules.

Even though hate speech may be constitutionally protected, you are not powerless in confronting it.

Universities, student governments, and student groups may be allowed to host speakers that promote anti-Semitic or anti-Israel views. However, administration and students are also allowed to condemn them for doing so.

Anti-Israel / Anti-Semitic Materials Displayed on Campus

Anti-Israel posters, flyers, mock notices, or apartheid wall installations often contain hate speech targeting Jews or Zionists.

These materials may violate school policy against discrimination. Every school has a code of conduct regulating student behavior and student group activity.

STEP 1. **Record all evidence.**

If you see or hear hateful speech: take videos and photos, save screenshots and emails, and keep flyers.

Attend anti-Israel events, take notes, and provide examples of the problematic anti-Israel speech or activity to the administration.

STEP 2. **Demand that your campus administration and student leaders condemn hate speech.**

Write an op-ed in your school paper.

Inform outside organizations to raise public awareness.



STEP 3.

Counter with positive messaging.

Table and host your own programs to inspire and connect students to Israel.

If you want to bring campaigns to campus, contact the StandWithUs Campus Department at campus@standwithus.com.



Disruptions of Pro-Israel Events

The First Amendment protects a speaker's right to speak and a listener's right to listen. When protesters disrupt a speaker, they may be violating the constitutional rights of the speaker and the audience. Disruptions also often violate university policies and state laws. For instance, university codes of conduct often prohibit disruptive behavior.

Disruptive behavior may take many forms, including shouting down a speaker or blocking the entrance to a scheduled event.



Image by Connor Radnovich, www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Judge-says-SF-State-Jewish-students-haven-t-12343014.php#item-85307-tbla-4

What do you do before the event?

STEP 1.

Ensure that campus police and administrators are aware of the event and the possibility of an illegal disruption.

Remind police that state law and/or university policy prohibit disruptions and that you would like disruptors to be arrested.

STEP 2.

Post signs on event doors that inform attendees of the relevant law and university policy.

See sample script on page 13, providing notice to attendees that disruptions are illegal and that violators may be punished.



Anti-Israel Disruption Averted

After learning that the Northeastern University (NEU) Hillel was bringing the StandWithUs Israeli Soldiers' Tour to campus, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and other groups planned a large protest. NEU Hillel reached out for help to the StandWithUs Legal Department, which made sure that everyone – including the event security team – knew the law. When the protesters realized that they could be arrested, they left and protested elsewhere with no audience.

What do you do at the event?

STEP 1.

At the start of the event, read a script stating that disruptions are illegal.

STEP 2.

If there is a disruption, do not engage protesters. Do not physically come into contact with them or their personal property. Make sure the speaker and the audience remain calm.

STEP 3.

Ask security to remove protesters and arrest anyone that is violating the law.

STEP 4.

Record evidence, film the event, especially disruptors' faces.

Sample Script

Welcome to [Event Name] at the [University Name].

Please be respectful of the guest speaker(s) and your university community.

If you choose to disrupt or walk out of this event, you should be informed that at [University Name], it is a violation of the Student Conduct Code to willfully disrupt student events, participate in a campus demonstration that infringes on the rights of others, or make noise that disturbs authorized university events, such as this one.

The Code further requires event attendees to comply with the directives of university officials, such as leaving a room when asked to do so.

In addition, you should know that in the state of [State Name], it is a misdemeanor to disturb a lawful public assembly like this event.

If you have questions, please hold them for the Q&A session at the end of the event.



Note:

Each state and university has its own relevant rules and laws. To learn the applicable rules and laws in your state and on your campus, contact legal@standwithus.com.

Permission to Videotape

If you are hosting a pro-Israel speaker or event, we highly recommend that you film it and obtain an appearance release from all attendees. This means that they consent to be filmed and recorded. A release will help protect you from any issues relating to videotaping and using footage.

Two main ways to obtain a release:

1. Have attendees acknowledge the release online when they purchase their tickets. Include the release in the invite, with language such as, “By purchasing your ticket, you agree to all terms in our Event Appearance Release.” Then hyperlink “Event Appearance Release” so the release is viewable.
2. Have attendees sign a release at the event in order to be admitted. If they are under 18, a parent or guardian must sign.



If the first two options are not possible, post visible signs at registration and throughout the event that state that the event is being videotaped. Be sure to make an announcement at the beginning of the event as well.

Sample Appearance Release

I/We, the undersigned individual(s), grant [Organizer Name] (“Organizer” with a business address of [University Address]), its members, speakers, consultants, partners, sponsors, licensees, assignees, and transferees (“Organizer”), the perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free right and license to:

- Record my participation and appearance on digital or film photography, videotape, audiotape, or any other form of medium (collectively, the “Recordings”).
- I agree that Organizer may tape and photograph me and record my voice, conversations, and sounds, including any performance of any type. I declare that any statements made by me during my appearance are true, to the best of my knowledge, and that neither they nor my appearance will violate or infringe upon the rights of any third party.
- Use my name (or my fictional name), likeness, voice, and biographical material in connection with these Recordings to be used by Organizer as it may desire.
- Reproduce, distribute, publicly display, and/or publicly perform, in print, electronic, or any other medium, copies of Recordings, in whole or in part, by and all means, devices, processes, and technologies now or hereafter known or devised. The undersigned represents that he or she possesses all rights necessary to grant this permission for and in connection with the event.

- I agree that Organizer may edit, alter, dub, and/or otherwise change the materials for any such purpose.
- This grant of rights is made voluntarily by me. I further agree to release and forever discharge Organizer, its agents, employees, and designated representatives, from any and all claims in law or equity that I, my heirs, or personal representatives, have or shall have, arising out of Recordings.
- I understand that the Organizer of this program shall be the exclusive owner of the result of Recordings and that they may screen it anywhere in the world, an unlimited number of times in any manner whatsoever as they may please. I acknowledge that I shall not sue and seek any injunctive or equitable relief from my releases.
- I hereby waive any right of inspection or approval of my appearance or the uses to which such appearance may be put.
- This agreement sets forth the entire understanding of the parties hereto with respect to the subject matter hereof and shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of [State Name]. Any claims or controversy arising out of or relating to this Agreement shall be brought exclusively in any federal or state court of competent jurisdiction located in [State Name], and the parties hereby consent to personal jurisdiction and venue in said court.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Anti-Israel Legislation or Referendum

BDS is a global campaign to boycott, divest from, and sanction Israel. BDS seeks to undermine international support for Israel and eventually eliminate the Jewish state.

BDS blurs the line between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. It dehumanizes Israelis and their supporters, seeks to deny Jews the right to self-determination in their ancestral homeland, and hurts Israelis and Palestinians alike.

BDS campaigns on campus consistently turn into racism against Jewish students. The movement damages university communities while advancing a fundamentally discriminatory agenda.

BDS on campuses usually exists in the the form of campaigns by Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and similar groups. SJP has over 100 chapters on college campuses across North America.



How does divestment work?

Most divestment campaigns come in the form of student government legislation against Israel.

- SJP often writes a bill claiming that certain international companies (particularly those involved in Israel's self-defense against terrorism) are helping Israel commit crimes against the Palestinians. Then, SJP calls on the university to stop investing in those companies.
- Student councils, which usually consist of 10 to 30 elected student leaders, are forced to vote on these bills, resulting in hours or weeks of debate, during which Israel is essentially put on trial.
- The most damaging campaigns organized are student government resolutions and student body-wide referendums calling on universities to stop investing in companies doing business with Israel. This is known as divestment.
- Other campaigns include “apartheid wall” displays, theatrical protests, and tours by anti-Israel speakers.
- While successful divestment campaigns are non-binding legally, they create a hostile campus climate.

Divestment campaigns also come in the form of referendums against Israel

- A referendum is a general election in which all students can vote on the question of whether or not the university should divest from companies doing business with Israel.
- SJP runs mass social media campaigns, writes student newspaper articles, and speaks with large numbers of students in person, hoping to mislead and manipulate them into voting in favor of divestment.

Overcome BDS by being proactive on campus

- Build friendships and relationships with the student government, student groups, and leaders on campus — show up for them, be their ally, and get involved with issues that you truly care about.
- MovementBuilder.net is a resource to build a proactive strategy that focuses on education and outreach in regard to Israel on campus.
- StandWithUs staff can help. Reach out to **campus@standwithus.com** or **research@standwithus.com**.

How StandWithUs can help you overcome BDS on campus

Strategy: Our staff has many years of experience working with students and campus professionals to overcome BDS campaigns. We offer crucial resources customized to your needs. Contact research@standwithus.com.

Campus: Our Campus Department is ready to work closely with you throughout the year. Our goal is to empower you and your community to win and become even stronger than you were before. Contact campus@standwithus.com.

Legal: Our Legal Department can help determine whether university policies or the student government's governing documents regulate BDS. Contact legal@standwithus.com.



Case Study: Divestment Revolution Overturned

After the UC Davis student senate passed a resolution in favor of divestment from Israel, two pro-Israel students appealed to the student court. The students challenged the constitutionality of the resolution, using language found in the UC Davis student government constitution. They successfully argued that the student constitution required that senate legislation pertain only to matters of student welfare—not unrelated political issues. The divestment resolution was overturned by the court.

Dealing with Professors

“Academic freedom” means that professors have a right to espouse original or controversial ideas. However, according to professional standards, professors should avoid teaching controversial matters that have no relation to the subject(s) they teach.

While “academic freedom” is an ambiguous term that requires case-by-case interpretation, it is widely understood that political indoctrination is distinct from “teaching” and often not protected by the doctrine of “academic freedom.”



Anti-Israel Course Canceled

A biology professor and virulent anti-Israel activist at the University of Missouri sought to teach an honors tutorial titled “Perspectives on Zionism.” A school committee approved the course despite the professor’s lack of any relevant academic background. After receiving a coalition letter from pro-Israel groups, the university canceled the course and changed its policies.

How to challenge anti-Israel/anti-Semitic professors

STEP 1.

Challenge a professor's false, misleading or discriminatory statements by asking targeted, respectful questions.

- You may want to speak to your professor privately, instead of confronting him or her in front of the class.
- Ask your professor about his or her sources. Offer to bring a speaker or materials presenting a different point of view.



Professor Not Hired Due to Unprofessional Anti-Israel Conduct

Dr. Steven Salaita expected to begin teaching at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in fall 2014, but the university revoked his invitation due to his anti-Semitic and anti-Israel tweets during the 2014 Gaza war. When Dr. Salaita invoked the doctrine of academic freedom in his defense, the university replied: “Dr. Salaita lacks the judgment, temperament, and thoughtfulness to serve as a member of our faculty in any capacity, but particularly to teach courses related to the Middle East.”

STEP 2.

If school policy permits, record your professor for evidence that he or she is engaging in political indoctrination or teaching outside the scope of his or her qualifications.

STEP 3.

Bring your concerns to the attention of the administration or outside organizations.

Challenging a professor's statements can be intimidating, but you are not alone. Reach out to **campus@standwithus.com**.

Grade retribution

If you are concerned that your professor has or will unfairly lower your grade because you are challenging anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, or hate speech, maintain written evidence of your concerns and any correspondence with the professor.

- According to professional standards, professors should grade coursework based on academic standards and should not factor a student's viewpoint into the grade.
- School policies typically spell out grading standards for coursework.
- Contact **campus@standwithus.com** or **legal@standwithus.com**.

Anti-Normalization

What is anti-normalization?

“Anti-normalization” is a policy of many anti-Israel extremist groups not to engage with Jews, Israelis, and others who believe in Israel’s right to exist (“Zionists”). They believe that engaging with Zionists requires giving in to what they perceive as unequal power dynamics and lending Zionism undeserved legitimacy. Many anti-Israel groups oppose and/or refuse to engage in any dialogue or cooperation with Jews or Israelis unless they adopt hardline and/or extremist anti-Israel political stances. These stances include “a full right of return for Palestinian refugees” into Israel rather than a Palestinian state — something that President Barack Obama has said would “extinguish Israel as a Jewish state.”



Pro-Israel Event Shutdown

The National LGBTQ Task Force hosted a conference in Chicago. As part of the conference, a reception featured a discussion about the experiences of the LGBTQ community in Israel. Over 200 protesters gathered outside the event and shouted hateful slogans, banged drums, and waved banners. Attendees were unable to enter, and the invited Israeli LGBTQ speakers were escorted from the event by security. The event was shut down.

How is anti-normalization reflected on campuses?

Anti-normalization can include anything from refusing to engage in conversation with a pro-Israel peer to refusing to allow Zionists to attend campus events. Other tactics includes preventing pro-Israel or anti-boycott messages from being shared, often by shutting down or preventing pro-Israel speakers from appearing on campus. While anti-normalization is typical of anti-Israel extremist groups, other unrelated groups, like the organizers of the Chicago Dyke March, have also adopted anti-normalization.



Pro-Israel Organization Excluded from Coalition

A Muslim student at San Diego State University (SDSU) was assaulted in an act of Islamophobic hate. Following the event, the SDSU Muslim Student Association drafted a list of demands to students and the administration, asking for zero tolerance of Islamophobia and that the campus become a safer environment. Thirty student organizations at SDSU, including Students Supporting Israel (SSI), co-signed the list of demands. Members of SJP rejected SSI's signature. SSI was the only organization to be excluded. SJP claimed "it didn't serve the interests of the community" to include a pro-Israel group.

Combating anti-normalization

Anti-normalization is a challenge for students of all backgrounds, but there are tools to counteract anti-normalization efforts on campuses, the most important being school policies and procedures. Anti-normalization may violate university policies, including non-discrimination policies, because it subjects pro-Israel individuals to different treatment than other groups on campus. This is particularly relevant when the use of school facilities or access to funding are denied to groups because of their views.

Another effective approach is to propose collaboration through events promoting dialogue/coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. We recommend doing so with the involvement of student government and/or university administrators.



Importance of Coalition Building

In response to the 2016 presidential election, students at George Washington University issued a list of demands to the university administration. Though the list was drafted by a coalition of progressive student organizations, progressive pro-Israel students were excluded, and one of the demands required the school to adopt an anti-Israel position. A pro-Israel student reached out to student leaders they knew in the progressive coalition and persuaded them not to take a one-sided stance. This highlights the importance of maintaining genuine relationships with open-minded progressive activists on campus.



Dealing with Media

Be prepared

Do research on the issue. Know your talking points.
Practice – do a mock Q&A.

Record the conversation

Let the reporter know you are recording the conversation so you don't violate state law. If you record, and there is a glaring error, you have proof to ask for a correction.

Off-the-record does not mean off-the-record

Everything you say is on the record and may be published.

Be professional

Don't make jokes in case your words are taken out of context.

Keep your answers brief and to the point

Don't feel obligated to answer every question. You can reply, "no comment." Don't say too much because if you do, you'll wind up revealing too much.

Use difficult questions as an opportunity

View difficult questions as an opportunity to explain your narrative. If you don't know the answer, don't make something up. Tell the reporter you will get back to them ASAP, before deadline.



If you need legal resources to deal with anti-Israel activity or anti-Semitism, contact us today.

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This publication sponsored by Rita and Steve Emerson