

RESPONSE TO AMCHA INITIATIVE LETTER (BELOW) FROM VASSAR COLLEGE

From: Elizabeth Bradley

Subject: Re: Vassar College mentioned in new study on academic boycotters and campus antisemitism

Date: November 15, 2017 at 8:32:05 PM PST

To: Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

Cc: Bill Plapinger, Jonathan Chenette

Thank you!

Elizabeth H. Bradley, President

VASSAR COLLEGE

Poughkeepsie, NY 12604

@EHBVassar

On Wed, Nov 15, 2017 at 2:33 PM, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin wrote:

Dear President Bradley,

I wanted to share with you AMCHA Initiative's new [report](#), "The Impact of Academic Boycotters of Israel on U.S. Campuses," which mentions Vassar College.

I know you are already familiar with the way in which academic boycotts violate the basic tenets of academic freedom if implemented, and I commend your predecessor, President Hill, for denouncing the American Studies Association's resolution to impose an academic boycott on Israel:

"Vassar College is firmly committed to academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas. We are opposed to boycotts of scholars and academic institutions anywhere in the world, and we strongly reject the call for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions... Vassar's commitment to academic freedom not only leads us to reject the call for a boycott, it helps ensure that our faculty and students may pursue their academic interests wherever they may lead, engage in unconstrained discussions, and express their views freely."

What you may not be aware of, however, and what we wanted to share, is new research that demonstrates the extent to which the on-campus implementation and advocacy of an academic boycott of Israel directly harm American students and faculty at U.S. universities. AMCHA's new study, which can be found [here](#), investigates these harms.

Our results strongly suggest that at least some faculty who have signed petitions or statements in support of an academic boycott of Israel are bringing their anti-Israel sentiments and support for BDS to campus through their department's sponsorship of events with pro-BDS speakers. These events, in turn, significantly increase the likelihood of on-campus acts of anti-Jewish hostility such as assault, harassment, destruction of property and suppression of speech. Specifically, the study found that pro-BDS faculty were between five and twelve times more likely to sponsor events with BDS-supporting speakers, and schools that hosted these events were twice as likely to have acts of anti-Jewish hostility.

The report has been covered in several media outlets, including *The Washington Free Beacon*, *The Jerusalem Post*, *Mosaic Magazine*, *Algemeiner*, *Jewish Press*, *Arutz Sheva*, and *Education Views*, among others.

I would be happy to discuss the report in more detail at your convenience. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

AMCHA Initiative, Director

To see the full report: <https://amchainitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Faculty-Report.pdf>

CC: Governing Board Chair William A. Plapinger
Dean of the Faculty Jonathan Chenette