

CUNY Hunter College mentioned in new study on academic boycotters and campus antisemitism

November 16, 2017

Dear President Raab,

I wanted to share with you AMCHA Initiative's new [report](#), "The Impact of Academic Boycotters of Israel on U.S. Campuses," which mentions CUNY Hunter 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 you for your outstanding statement denouncing the American Studies Association's resolution to impose an academic boycott on Israel:

"As president and provost of Hunter College, one of the most diverse and inclusive institutions of higher learning in the United States, we join with the American Association of American Universities and the City University of New York in unequivocally opposing the academic boycott of Israeli universities endorsed by the American Studies Association (ASA). Although Hunter is not a member of the ASA, we believe it is essential to speak out against academic boycotts of any kind, as they violate the fundamental values of academic freedom and open inquiry and dialogue that are essential to the life of the academy. Limiting opportunities for partnerships and the exchange of ideas by isolating and stigmatizing groups of scholars because of judgments about their nations' foreign or domestic policies is a tragically misguided way to address political issues."

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
www.AMCHAinitiative.org

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

CC: Provost Dr. Lon S. Kaufman
Dean of Arts & Sciences Andrew J. Polsky