

Columbia University mentioned in new study on academic boycotters and campus antisemitism

November 15, 2017

Dear President Bollinger,

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

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:

"I have made my opposition to academic boycotts of Israel emphatically clear over the years, most prominently in my 2007 letter that was signed by some 400 of my fellow college and university presidents speaking out against the British University and College Union's boycott of Israeli scholars and universities. I stand by that statement today when considering the recent vote by the American Studies Association for just such a boycott...ASA's vote runs counter to...essential academic and political freedom and, taken to its logical conclusion, would necessarily result in boycotts of fellow scholars and peer institutions from many nations around the world. I reject the ASA's position which would compromise an essential value of universities in an increasingly global society..."

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

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