

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

November 16, 2017

Dear President Pollak,

I wanted to share with you AMCHA Initiative's new [report](#), "The Impact of Academic Boycotters of Israel on U.S. Campuses," which mentions Cornell 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 statement denouncing the American Studies Association's resolution to impose an academic boycott on Israel that you made while you were Provost at the University of Michigan:

"While we affirm the right of individual faculty, faculties, and professional academic associations to hold and express different viewpoints, we believe that academic boycotts violate the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech, which are fundamental to our missions of education and research."

I also commend your predecessor at Cornell University, President Skorton, for his condemnation of the ASA resolution.

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: University Counsel and Secretary of the Corporation, Madelyn F. Wessel
Provost Michael I. Kotlikoff
Dean of Arts & Sciences Gretchen Ritter