



ISRAEL ON CAMPUS COALITION 2019 CAMPUS TRENDS REPORT



A NOTE FROM ICC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Partners,

With America's pro-Israel community facing an increasingly complex reality on college and university campuses, **Israel on Campus Coalition (ICC)** is pleased to share our latest analysis of campus trends involving Israel.

As part of its mission to provide an updated and realistic picture of the environment on U.S. campuses, ICC tracks thousands of Israel-related events at colleges and universities each year. Our analysts use this information to identify trends and assess changing needs at individual campuses and in the broader pro-Israel community.

Based on data from across the country, ICC's latest **Campus Trends Report** reveals a rapidly evolving landscape on U.S. campuses. Throughout the prior academic year, ICC and its partners recorded a surge in attacks targeting Jewish students. In a defining national trend, campus antisemitism reflected clear links to anti-Israel activity, with Israel's detractors intensifying hostility toward Jewish groups.

Rising challenges on U.S. campuses reflected parallel threats in off-campus spaces. In an April report, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) noted near-historic levels of antisemitism, including a series of violent atrocities targeting Jewish communities. As growing tension and frustration across the political spectrum fosters a national environment of division and dissent, the campus is not immune.

While intensifying prejudice, anti-Israel activist groups sought to manipulate definitions of antisemitism in student government resolutions honoring the lives lost in several antisemitic tragedies. Disregarding the symbolic significance of these statements, activists challenged definitions of anti-Zionism and anti-Israel activity, rejecting interpretations of antisemitism overwhelmingly supported by Jewish community groups.

Despite the challenges, pro-Israel students launched innovative initiatives to engage campus communities and build new alliances. Working across campuses, students from America's top universities are leading sophisticated efforts to highlight Israeli innovation and humanitarianism. Demonstrating the impact of pro-Israel outreach, student governments and campus administrators are rejecting divisive BDS initiatives and expressing public support for Israel and pro-Israel students. On dozens of campuses, American and Israeli academic institutions are increasing cooperation, forging new partnerships while deepening existing ties.

As the challenges mount, ICC and our partners will continue to empower the pro-Israel campus community in critical efforts to overcome prejudice and strengthen campus support for the Jewish state.

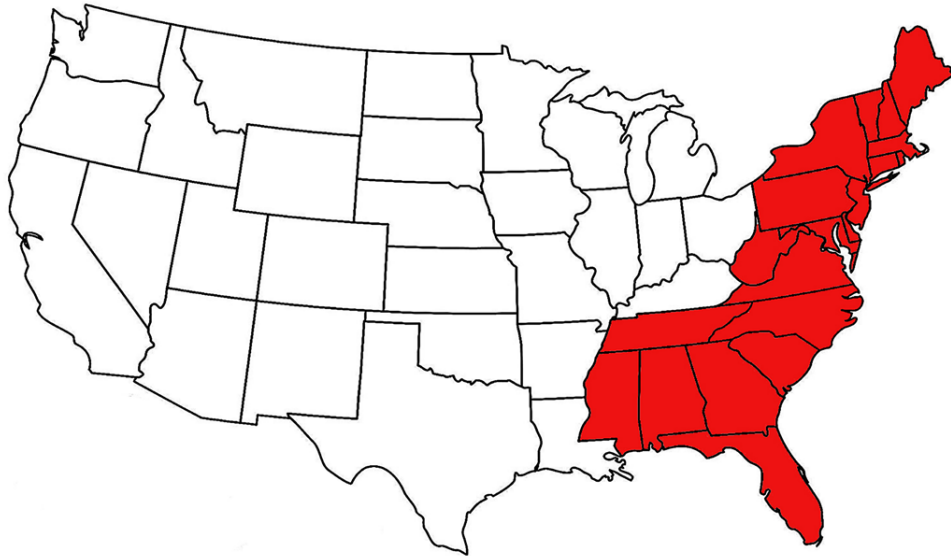
Onward together,



Jacob Baime
Executive Director
Israel on Campus Coalition

DATA DOWNLOAD

East Coast schools and Ivy League universities experienced high rates of anti-Israel activity during the 2018-2019 academic year.

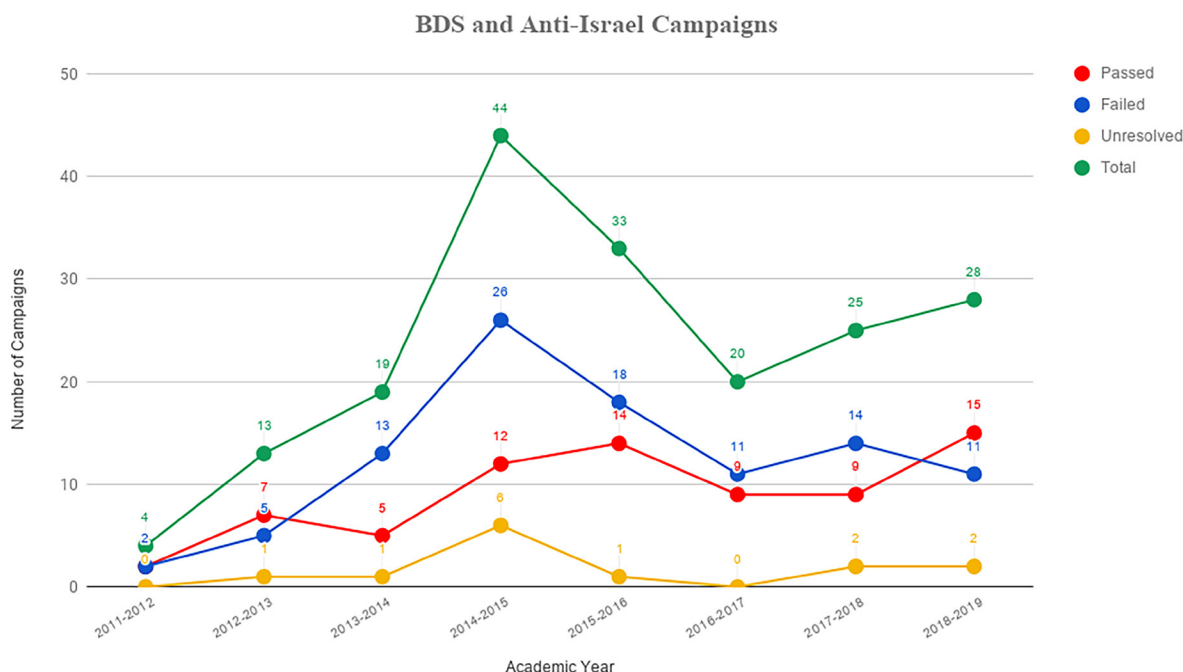


Whereas the Midwest was a hub of anti-Israel activity during the 2016-2017 academic year and the West Coast was a hotbed of anti-Israel activism during the 2015-2016 academic year, anti-Israel activity has increasingly centered around the East Coast for the past two academic years.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, anti-Israel activity increased by 17% on the East Coast. During the 2018-2019 academic year, East Coast campuses experienced more anti-Israel events than any other region.

Another emerging trend is an increase in anti-Israel activity at Ivy League universities. **Brown University**, **Columbia University**, and **Cornell University** all faced BDS campaigns during the 2018-2019 academic year, and **Harvard University** saw an uptick in anti-Israel events over the past two academic years.

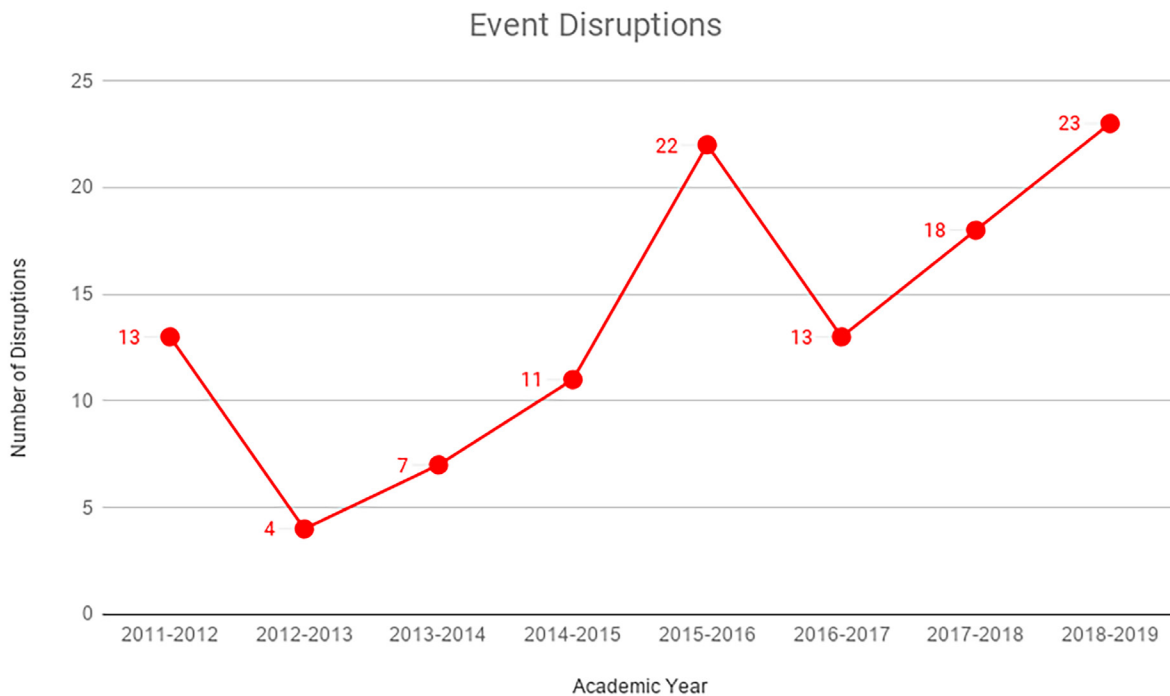
BDS AND ANTI-ISRAEL CAMPAIGNS (2011-2019)



After a peak in BDS campaigns during the 2014-2015 academic year, ICC and its partners began to level the playing field and empower students to speak out and stand up against anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, and antisemitic activity. A decrease in BDS campaigns after the 2014-2015 academic year reflects this trend. As the BDS movement has become more established over time, anti-Israel tactics have become increasingly hostile as Israel's detractors double down on efforts to make campuses inhospitable to Jews and Zionists.

As the figure above shows, there were 28 BDS and anti-Israel campaigns during the 2018-2019 academic year. Of these campaigns, 20 were traditional BDS resolutions, referenda, and boycotts, and 8 were non-BDS anti-Israel resolutions. Examples of the latter include **Pitzer College** Student Senate resolutions to [censure](#) and issue a [vote of no confidence](#) in President Melvin Oliver for vetoing Pitzer College Council's study abroad boycott of the University of Haifa, **Williams College** Council's resolution to deny Williams Initiative for Israel (WIFI) registered student organization status, a **DePaul University** Faculty Council [resolution](#) condemning a pro-Israel faculty member, and student government resolutions at **Tufts University** and the **University of Michigan-Dearborn** in support of [anti-Israel faculty members](#).

DISRUPTIONS OF PRO-ISRAEL CAMPUS EVENTS (2011-2019)



The 2018-2019 academic year saw the highest recorded level of anti-Israel disruptions of pro-Israel events. Disruptions occurred on campuses across the country and targeted events featuring Israeli speakers such as the Consul General of Israel in New York [Dani Dayan](#) and LGBTQ activist and former Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) commander [Hen Mazzig](#). Anti-Israel students also disrupted a [student government meeting](#) at **Georgia State University**, a **University of California** [Board of Regents meeting](#), and a [Blue Ribbon Panel meeting](#) at the **University of Michigan**. Also targeted were Israeli cultural celebrations like a Dead Sea spa night at the **University of Rochester** as well as Israel block parties at [New York University \(NYU\)](#), the **University of California, Irvine**, the [University of Texas at Austin](#), and the [University of Texas at San Antonio](#).

1) A **pro-Israel event** is an event on campus related to Israel that has as one of its primary organizers a group that supports the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish and democratic state.

2) An **anti-Israel event** is an event on campus related to Israel that has as one of its primary organizers a group that: A) clearly denies the right of Israel to exist as a Jewish and democratic state with secure and recognized borders and/or B) actively promotes an agenda of boycott, divestment, and sanctions against the State of Israel.

3) A **disruption** refers to any behavior that interrupts or seriously interferes with the speaker's ability to communicate or provide information, instruction, or service, including behavior that results in the cancellation of a campus event or interferes with other students' ability to engage in learning, whether in a classroom setting or at a campus event.

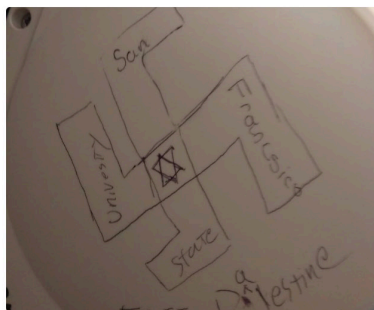
ANTI-ZIONISM AND ANTISEMITISM

Over the past several years, antisemitic activity has reached critical levels on American college campuses. In April, the ADL, a non-partisan monitor of hate crimes and discrimination, reported [a consistent trend of attacks targeting Jewish students](#). With growing frequency, antisemitic incidents demonstrated strong links to anti-Zionist sentiments. Bolstered by professional resources and campus allies, anti-Israel activists intensified attacks on Jewish groups, repeatedly silencing and ostracizing Jewish students. In many cases, anti-Israel campaigns employed unmistakable antisemitic rhetoric, advancing messages with malicious symbolism familiar to Jewish communities. In others, activists embraced more subtle forms of discrimination, appropriating Jewish identity or promoting watered-down definitions of antisemitism. Taken together, these incidents revealed a significant overlap between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

Throughout the prior academic year, anti-Israel propaganda materials contained explicit antisemitic messaging.



At **Columbia University**, flyers advertising Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) events invoked age-old antisemitic stereotypes, displaying caricatured illustrations of a [horned Israeli soldier](#).



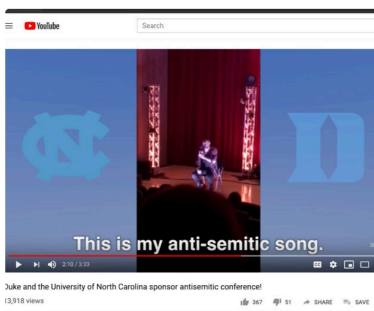
[Anti-Israel graffiti](#) at **San Francisco State University** juxtaposed calls for a "Free Palestine" with images of a swastika and Jewish star.



Near Hillel's offices at the **University of Oregon**, anti-Israel activists [vandalized a sign](#) for campus visitors, scrawling obscenities and pro-Palestinian slogans over a Hebrew welcome message.



At the **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**, an anti-Israel student protested Israeli independence celebrations, [carrying a poster](#) with Nazi imagery and messages calling to "gas" Jewish students.



During a conference hosted by **Duke University** and the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, a pro-Palestinian speaker urged participants to join [his rendition of an "antisemitic song."](#)



At **New York University (NYU)**, the Bronfman Center [temporarily closed](#) after a student posted antisemitic messages, one of which expressed his "desire for Zionists to die."

In similar campus incidents, Israel's detractors promoted vicious antisemitic slurs, vilifying Jews as [racists](#), [white supremacists](#)." During a guest lecture at the **University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)**, professor and fringe activist Rabab Abdulhadi – who also addressed SJP's 2017 national conference as a keynote speaker – [described Jews and Zionists](#) as "white supremacists," seeking to humiliate a Jewish student who rose to challenge her. In a similar incident at the **University of Michigan**, a guest lecturer presented [side-by-side photos](#) of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The images appeared together on the same presentation slide above a definition for the term "genocide." Another slide featured a [picture](#) of a pig holding a Star of David, calling Israel "the Zionist puppet state of imperialism."

Reflecting a common contradiction in the anti-Israel movement, Israel's detractors injected frequent antisemitism into "social justice" and "human rights" campaigns. In a national initiative called "Deadly Exchange," part of a broader campaign organized by **Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP)**, students protested U.S.-Israel police exchanges, associating the partnerships with systematized racism in America. On several occasions, "Deadly Exchange" activists conflated the struggles of Palestinian and Black Americans, connecting Israeli policies to alleged abuses by U.S. law enforcement. Last year, a [provocative video](#) advertised JVP's campaign, blaming "Jewish organizations" for supporting the exchanges and enabling discrimination and racism in America. The group's assertion promoted familiar stereotypes, suggesting U.S. Jews had deepened America's troubles by advancing foreign interests.

Despite widespread [criticism](#) of JVP's antisemitism, its campaign took root across the country with "Deadly Exchange" initiatives emerging at the **University of Chicago, Georgia State University, Michigan State University, NYU, and Tufts University**. In Georgia, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), a Black police coalition, and the Georgia Council on American Indian Concerns (GCOAIC), a Native-American group based in Georgia, [slammed](#) JVP's local efforts, defending U.S.-Israel ties while condemning "undeniably antisemitic" Deadly Exchange programs.

At **Williams College**, anti-Israel activists led a divisive campaign against Williams Initiative for Israel (WIFI), preventing the campus group from obtaining registered status. By manipulating the Williams College Council, Israel's detractors obstructed WIFI's requests for recognition, politicizing what is typically a perfunctory approval process. At **Columbia University**, SJP [refused dialogue](#) with Jewish and pro-Israel "racists," describing "social ostracization" as a "powerful tool that the student body can use to voice their rejection of Zionism."

At **NYU**, SJP and JVP led a coalition of minority groups that [pledged its opposition](#) to Jewish and pro-Israel organizations, adopting a sweeping 2018 "boycott" of campus and community Jewish groups. Last May, Jewish and pro-Israel NYU students observed the demonization of Zionism at their own graduation ceremony. During the university's Doctoral Convocation program, doctoral graduate speaker Steven William Thrasher lauded BDS efforts, [praising SJP and JVP activists responsible for antisemitic harassment](#).



At the **University of California, Davis (UC Davis)**, Israel's detractors mounted a fierce campaign against Jewish student body president Michael Gofman. Following Gofman's election in the spring of 2018, UC Davis' SJP-affiliated, anti-Israel party [demanded a recall](#), accusing Gofman and others of voter fraud. SJP students rallied to the party's cause, highlighting Gofman's Jewish and pro-Israel affiliations, but ultimately failed to change the election's outcome. In a particularly vicious protest, SJP activists screamed obscenities at Gofman, combining anti-Israel chants with calls for his ouster.

The hostile campaign against Gofman continued into the 2018-2019 academic year. In September, the university's Ethnic and Cultural Affairs Commissioner joined a student senator in [boycotting](#) the elected Jewish president. Notably, just weeks after declaring her refusal to work with Gofman, the Commissioner [drew criticism](#) for her failure to address campus antisemitism. When antisemitic flyers appeared on UC Davis' campus, raising fears among Jewish students, the cultural commission made no contact with Jewish organizations or leaders. Asked by a senator why she had failed to establish these connections, the Commissioner resisted her questioner's "accusatory statements," describing criticisms of her inaction as "counterproductive."

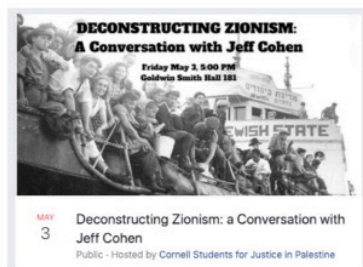


“ I had Jewish students walk up to me and tell me how uncomfortable they were walking around campus with a Magen David necklace on or with a kippah on. It was my job to tell them it would be okay and they need to stand strong.”

Former Associated Students, University of California (ASUCD) President Michael Gofman

APPROPRIATING JEWISH IDENTITY

On dozens of campuses, SJP and its allies sought to advance their own definitions of Jewish identity and antisemitism. In many cases, these efforts included revisionist attempts to distinguish Zionism from Jewish peoplehood, with non-Jewish groups denying that Israel is intrinsic to Jewish identity.



At **Cornell University**, an SJP “teach-in” explained how Jewish students should “navigate their relationship with the State of Israel.”



At the **University of Minnesota**, an SJP panel dissected “the dynamics between Jewish and Zionist identities.”



At the **University of Southern California**, SJP activists launched a community event titled “Zionism vs. the Jewish People.” Among other topics, the event proposed to explore how modern-day “Zionism threatens Jews around the world.”

Reflecting similar efforts, non-Jewish groups led a national campaign to distinguish anti-Zionism from antisemitism. During a **Stanford University** teach-in, SJP students [discussed](#) the dangers of conflating antisemitism with “critiques against Zionism and the Israeli state.” At **DePaul University**, non-Jewish activists organized a [similar event](#) with guest speakers from American Muslims for Palestine. In several cases, Israel’s detractors sought to influence campus resolutions denouncing antisemitism, imposing their preferred definitions of anti-Jewish discrimination. At **Barnard College**, anti-Israel activists resisted a student government [statement](#) condemning the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre. Ignoring the resolution’s significance for Jews, anti-Israel activists opposed the inclusion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) [definition of antisemitism](#). Challenging definition clauses that highlighted forms of anti-Israel bigotry – including charges of dual loyalty, comparing Israelis to Nazis, and denying Jewish rights to self-determination – anti-Israel students attempted to redefine antisemitism on their own terms, disregarding the definition overwhelmingly endorsed by Jews and the international community.



On several other campuses, Israel's detractors sought to manipulate statements containing IHRA's definition. In February, when **Stanford's** student government considered an antisemitism resolution, anti-Israel activists opposed its references to Israel, pressuring senators [to adopt](#) modified language. Amid similar efforts at the **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC)**, student representatives passed a [heavily diluted](#) measure, removing sections that classified links to Nazism as antisemitism. At the **University of South Florida**, senators considering an antisemitism bill [rejected language](#) that described Israel as "a Jewish collectivity." Jewish groups met similar resistance at **Case Western Reserve University, Wake Forest University, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo**, and **UC Davis**, where non-Jewish students disputed or challenged Jewish interpretations of antisemitism.

While attempting to influence campus resolutions, anti-Israel activists denigrated Jewish efforts to memorialize the lives lost in a series of antisemitic attacks.

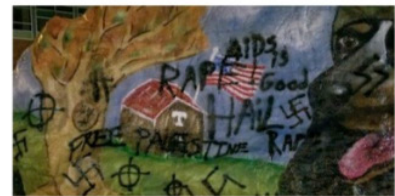


At the **Claremont Colleges**, a mural meant to honor victims of the Pittsburgh massacre was [covered with a Palestinian flag](#).

Joint Statement on Vigil With Jewish Voice for Peace at Berkeley

On Wednesday November 7, Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace at UC Berkeley posted an event on Facebook organizing a joint vigil to honor the 11 lives lost in the antisemitic massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on October 27th as well as the 3 children killed in Gaza due to Israeli air raids that same weekend. In the aftermath of these separate instances of violence against our communities, we recognized that we do not have to mourn alone. We do not have to mourn in fear; there is power in our solidarity. We made the event not to analogize or equate these acts of violence, but to come bearing our distinct pain into a shared space of healing.

At the **University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley)**, anti-Israel groups held a distasteful [campus "vigil"](#) conflating the Pittsburgh attack with Gaza border violence.



At the **University of Tennessee, Knoxville**, where Jewish students had recently held a vigil for Pittsburgh victims, students found [swastikas painted alongside the phrases "Free Palestine" and "Kill Jews."](#)

These incidents were reminiscent of events on several other campuses, where activists coupled anti-Israel slogans with antisemitic imagery.

FRINGE JEWISH ACTIVISM



In their attempts to redefine antisemitism, non-Jewish students often sought legitimacy from Jewish groups. By supporting these efforts, a fringe minority of Jewish activists reinforced growing antisemitism on U.S. campuses. At **UIUC**, **Stanford**, **UC Davis**, and other schools, JVP chapters joined or endorsed campaigns opposing antisemitism resolutions. While purporting to represent Jewish interests, JVP's efforts challenged those of mainstream Jewish groups, which supported measures defining anti-Israel antisemitism.

At **Stanford**, JVP [took the lead](#) in lobbying senators to omit Israel-related references from resolution clauses. This was not the only time JVP, in partnership with SJP, denigrated and targeted Stanford's Jewish community. Last May, when Stanford's JVP and SJP chapters joined in hosting cartoonist Eli Valley, JVP flyers displayed [controversial drawings](#) by Valley, prompting sharp criticism from Jewish groups. Featuring caricatures of Jewish biblical scenes and figures, Valley's artwork used antisemitic imagery to lambast Israeli policies. Notably, despite [apologizing](#) for its "offending," "tactless," and "ill-planned" posters, JVP denied their links to prejudice, dismissing charges of antisemitism as "absurd" and "altogether misrepresented."

Throughout the academic year, JVP strengthened its ties to the broader anti-Israel movement. In January, the organization [formally rejected](#) Israel's right to exist, but distinguished its position from antisemitism. Providing cover for Israel's non-Jewish detractors, JVP's national actions reflected similar efforts by campus activists. Endorsing divestment at **NYU**, JVP's chapter president [clarified](#) her group's position on antisemitism, rejecting "the classification of BDS as antisemitic." At **Brown University** and **Swarthmore College**, JVP activists played prominent roles in promoting campus divestment. At **Cornell**, anti-Israel Jewish students [echoed](#) JVP's national rhetoric, condemning the "Zionist mythos" while denying links to antisemitism.

COALITIONS AND INTERSECTIONALITY



On dozens of campuses, anti-Israel coalitions exploited intersectionality, a worldview that emphasizes similarities between distinct experiences of social oppression. As in previous years, intersectionality allowed SJP to connect its grievances with broader causes, and to equate Palestinian struggles with oppression suffered by other groups. In this way, SJP promoted growing hostility toward Jewish students, encouraging and normalizing an environment of antisemitism among minority groups on campus.

At **Swarthmore** last fall, SJP launched an aggressive BDS campaign, condemning U.S. support for Israel while comparing Israeli policies to “South African Apartheid.” In promoting its initiative, SJP lobbied a variety of Swarthmore minority groups, soliciting public endorsements from the [Indigenous Student Association](#), [African American Student Society](#), [Queer Union](#), and others. Reflecting pro-BDS tactics at NYU, SJP requested “solidarity letters” from its allies, encouraging supporters to emphasize their connections with Palestinian struggles. In one such letter, Swarthmore’s association for queer, transgender, and questioning students (COLORS), [blasted Israel](#) for sanctioning “progressivism and ‘gay rights’ while engaging in the oppression of Palestinians.” In another, activists [conveyed](#) their shared “struggles with the Palestinian people,” describing common experiences under “settler-colonialism.”

In February, Brown Divest, the pro-BDS coalition at **Brown University**, announced an anti-Israel [divestment campaign](#), highlighting minority struggles and “the intersectionality of different resistance movements.”

After petitioning campus activist groups, anti-Israel campaigners received [endorsements](#) from the Brown Immigrant Rights Coalition, Brown Black Heritage, the Bengali Students Club, the Vietnamese Student Association, Brown Asian Sisters Empowered, and others.

At **Emory University**, SJP persuaded local allies to defend its [attacks on Jewish students](#), publishing a [letter of support](#) with signatures from dozens of minority activists. Despite a failed divestment [campaign](#) at **Cornell University**, anti-Israel efforts received formal [support](#) from the Men of Color Council, the Queer Political Action Committee, Native American and Indigenous Students, and 21 other campus groups. Throughout the prior academic year, JVP's "Deadly Exchange" initiative underscored intersectionality's contributions to anti-Israel activism. In Georgia, JVP's local efforts culminated in a vicious campaign at **Georgia State University**, where anti-Israel students urged administrators to sever ties with the [Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange \(GILEE\)](#). Last April, JVP activists introduced a [failed resolution](#) condemning GILEE's cooperation with Israel, blaming U.S.-Israel ties for racist police shootings and law-enforcement brutality.

At **NYU**, anti-Israel students promoted [similar efforts](#), explaining how "Islamophobia, 'border security,' and the surveillance state in the United States are bolstered by alliances [with] Israeli security forces." At the **University of Chicago**, an SJP [workshop](#) asserted that U.S. police "suppress civilian populations through training exchange programs with Israel's Defense Forces." Last February, a **Michigan State University** [event](#) drew "connections between Israel's occupying military forces and the unethical practices of American law." In the **University of California** system, divestment activists [opposed](#) ADL sensitivity training for campus police, protesting the group's pro-Israel stances and alleged reinforcement of "anti-Muslim biases."

Taken together, these efforts demonstrated the central role of coalitions in advancing anti-Israel initiatives. Having established dozens of campus-based partnerships, Israel's detractors reaped the advantages of intersectionality, leveraging coalitions to intensify attacks on Israel. While coalitional efforts typically focused on BDS, they also encouraged attacks on Jewish students, enabling anti-Israel activists to legitimize clear instances of prejudice under the cover of intersectional coalition support.

ANTI-ISRAEL PROFESSIONAL INFLUENCE



Together with strategic coalitions, growing assistance from professional organizations increased the sophistication of anti-Israel activists. Throughout the prior academic year, a broad range of anti-Israel community groups – including **Jewish Voice for Peace**, **Palestine Legal**, **American Muslims for Palestine**, the **American Friends Service Committee**, and the **U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights** – sought to influence the campus landscape, offering generous support to anti-Israel students. In many cases, strategic and material support enabled vicious attacks on Jewish and pro-Israel students. In others, professional resources enhanced coordination among activists, creating the appearance of deep grassroots support for the anti-Israel cause.

Professional anti-Israel groups continued to apply various techniques in their attempts to influence U.S. campuses. Across the country, anti-Israel groups advanced a robust digital media strategy, maintaining websites and social platforms for students. With growing professional support, SJP increased its reliance on social media and paid online advertising. On several campuses, digital channels helped SJP unite its members, creating a virtual forum for anti-Israel activists.

Community groups played a central role in promoting a “Deadly Exchange” campaign at **Georgia State University**. Critical to these efforts was Edward Ahmed Mitchell, Executive Director of the Georgia Chapter of the **Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)**.

While working to shape the Israel-related discourse, professional groups provided activists with legal resources, often taking legal action against academic institutions. One such group, **Palestine Legal**, regularly intervenes in campus affairs to assist anti-Israel students. Throughout the prior academic year, Palestine Legal continued to issue multiple threats and warnings on behalf of Israel’s detractors. At the **University of Michigan**, the group [defended](#) lecturers who refused to write recommendation letters for students participating in Israel study abroad programs. After Michigan’s administration [censured](#) both faculty members, taking formal action against one of them, Palestine Legal issued statements on their behalf, announcing [its decision to counsel](#) one of the instructors.

Throughout the academic year, Palestine Legal responded similarly to events at **Temple University**, **Fordham University**, **San Francisco State University**, **University of Massachusetts Amherst**, **City College of New York**, **UCLA**, and the **Claremont Colleges**, often defending attacks on Jewish and pro-Israel students. Taken together, these incidents emphasize the group's involvement as an advocate for Israel's detractors, and its growing role in supporting and enabling campus antisemitism.

During "Israel Apartheid Week," an annual event series for anti-Israel students, BDS efforts exemplified professional support across campuses. In April, the **BDS National Committee (BNC)**, a coalition of [329 pro-BDS groups including internationally-designated terrorist organizations](#), released a comprehensive handbook for Apartheid Week organizers, providing activists with relevant messaging and strategic guidance. Among other topics, the handbook addressed ideas for campus events, recommending "themes and shared images to convey a strong message of global coordinated action." Ahead of "Israel Apartheid Week," BNC deployed its resources nationwide, preparing identical graphics for activists at [Emory University](#), [Wesleyan College](#), [University of Louisville](#), [Georgia State University](#), [Harvard University](#), and [The Ohio State University](#).



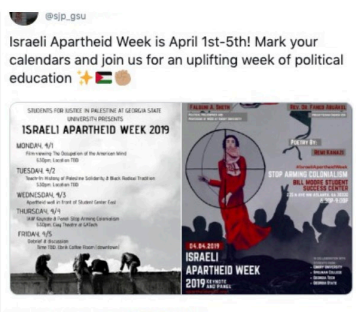
Emory University



Wesleyan College



University of Louisville



Georgia State University



Harvard University



The Ohio State University

National efforts against Israel study abroad programs reflected similar coordination. In September 2018, the **U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI)** launched an [online toolkit](#) for student activists, promoting "an array of useful resources and information, from tips on researching a campaign to potential actions" against Israel-related partnerships. Throughout the academic year, USACBI sustained its national study abroad campaign, coordinating initiatives and supporting faculty-led boycotts

against study abroad exchanges with Israel on multiple U.S. campuses, including [Pitzer College](#) and the [University of Michigan](#).

Similarities across campus campaigns demonstrated the extent of anti-Israel professional support. As illustrated by the anti-Israel initiative at **Georgia State University**, professional groups often intervened in student BDS efforts, drafting or influencing the text of student government resolutions. In many cases, students sought organizational guidance before introducing these measures, demonstrating their dependence on community groups. A computerized analysis reveals [considerable similarities](#) among anti-Israel resolutions drafted for different campuses. Broadly, these overlaps indicate the role of professional groups in creating resolution templates for anti-Israel students.

At **Emory University**, anti-Israel “eviction notices” closely resembled flyers distributed on other campuses. In previous years, activists employed identical tactics of antisemitic harassment, targeting Jews with mock evictions at [NYU](#), [Claremont Colleges](#), [Binghamton University](#), the [University of Michigan](#), and several other schools. Despite creating the impression of grassroots activism, these efforts illustrated similarities among campus campaigns, emphasizing strong organizational influences over students.

PRO-ISRAEL ACTIVISM



Despite significant challenges, the prior academic year marked a period of growth and success for America's pro-Israel community. Amid rising antisemitism, Israel's supporters increased cooperation, launching collaborative efforts across campus and community boundaries. On dozens of campuses, students met anti-Israel initiatives with growing sophistication, organizing effective responses to divisive BDS campaigns. In several cases, students emerged as an essential resource in combatting discrimination, with campus activists supporting national efforts against antisemitism.

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Beyond confronting threats, students developed proactive and innovative approaches to pro-Israel activism. Through broad-based outreach initiatives, Israel's supporters engaged a wide range of campus communities, exposing fellow students to Israel's strengths and global contributions. Student-led efforts also influenced campus administrators, drawing strong support for Israel and pro-Israel communities. As pro-Israel outreach broadened, U.S. and Israeli institutions strengthened academic ties, creating new partnerships while increasing collaboration.

COHESION AND COOPERATION

While the prior academic year saw a surge in pro-Israel cooperation and coordination, professional collaboration among anti-Israel activists also reflected an increase in shared challenges across campus and community spaces. As anti-Israel organizations bolstered ties with campus activists, intensifying Israel-related antisemitism, pro-Israel students and community members faced common threats of discrimination and delegitimization. Within an environment of growing hostility both on campus and more broadly, pro-Israel students and community groups strengthened collaboration, leading united efforts across national and institutional boundaries. Critical to these efforts was a diverse network of Jewish and pro-Israel organizations, which leveraged campus and community resources to confront anti-Israel prejudice. By unifying student and community advocates, a sophisticated pro-Israel movement worked to overcome discrimination, countering antisemitism while broadening support for Israel.

Reflecting coordinated action in the broader pro-Israel community, pro-Israel students organized innovative initiatives in the face of mounting challenges. From joint statements to collective mobilization efforts, student campaigns demonstrated effective responses to anti-Israel discrimination.

Confronting prejudice at **UC Berkeley**, Jewish groups issued a powerful [statement](#) last April, highlighting antisemitism in Berkeley's student government. After an anti-Israel senator described support for a Jewish student as "Zionist tears," drawing applause from fellow representatives, the Berkeley Hillel Student Board, Bears For Israel, the Jews of Color Initiative, and other groups joined in condemning the use of anti-Zionist rhetoric to target Jews. Over 80 student groups from campuses across the country signed onto a [statement](#) in solidarity with **Emory University** students who were targeted with anti-Israel messages. In addressing Israel-related antisemitism, these efforts demonstrated united opposition to bigotry in the anti-Israel community.

During recent academic years, pro-Israel students led collaborative and effective responses to campus BDS campaigns. Multi-pronged pro-Israel efforts defeated anti-Israel measures twice at **The Ohio State University (OSU)** during the 2018-2019 academic year. The first measure was voted down by the OSU student government in December by a vote of 7-30-3 (for-against-abstained). The second attempt by Israel's detractors to push an anti-Israel measure was defeated in February when BDS activists failed to collect the 1,000 undergraduate signatures required to put an anti-Israel referendum on the student government election ballot. These incidents, which bring the total number of anti-Israel propositions introduced at **OSU** to eight over the past five years, demonstrate anti-Israel activists' determination to denigrate Israel and her supporters as well as effective pro-Israel measures to stymie anti-Israel proposals.

A BDS referendum question was blocked from **Columbia University's** student government election ballot in March of 2019. Following almost four hours of debate, the Columbia College Student Council turned down the measure by a secret ballot vote of 17-20 (for-against), effectively blocking a campus-wide BDS referendum at the school. The vote was the culmination of an extended campaign in which

Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD) urged the Student Council President to place a referendum question on the election ballot. During the student council meeting, those in favor and those against the measure were given a total of ten minutes to present their case, followed by a heated debate among the student senators. The pro-Israel community showed up in force, strongly defending their position and outnumbering anti-Israel activists by two to one.

At the **University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB)**, a BDS resolution was defeated by a secret ballot vote of 10-14 with zero abstentions in May of 2019. The all-night student government meeting lasted over ten hours and featured over a hundred impassioned speeches and student government debate. Pro-Israel students, some of whom were targeted by [antisemitic attacks](#) in the days leading up to the vote, led a diligent campaign, engaging supporters and allies to speak up about the harmful and antisemitic effects of BDS.

A day after the **UCSB** vote, BDS was defeated at **Cornell University** by a [secret ballot vote](#) of 14-15 with one abstention. Anti-Israel activists attempted to exploit a procedural statute, convincing the student government to consider the resolution as a “sense of the body” measure whereby two votes would be given to undergraduates present in the room for the vote. Ultimately, this tactic backfired on Israel’s detractors and worked in favor of Israel’s supporters as the room, which was filled with pro-Israel students, voted overwhelmingly against the anti-Israel legislation.



In these cases and many others, campus-focused organizations worked in tandem with students to mobilize pro-Israel support and provide educational tools and resources to counter misleading and false information with real facts.

In an encouraging development, **Alums for Campus Fairness (ACF)**, a national alumni network countering campus-based discrimination, expanded its footprint and served as a critical voice for Jewish and pro-Israel students. Throughout the prior academic year, ACF activated its community network, mobilizing alumni to inform campus administrators of Israel-related antisemitism. Responding to events at **UCLA**, the group [highlighted](#) SJP's vicious assault on an Israel education event, urging administrators to strengthen protections for pro-Israel students. In May 2019, an ACF-affiliated alumnus [wrote publicly](#) about **NYU's** study abroad boycott, demonstrating the effort's strong connections to discrimination. At **Pitzer College**, a member of the **Claremont Colleges**, ACF letters [praised](#) Pitzer's president for renouncing similar boycott campaigns, and [opposed](#) anti-Israel activists demanding his resignation.

The **Academic Engagement Network (AEN)**, a national organization of college and university faculty members, played a similar role in combating anti-Israel bigotry. In April, a professor in AEN's network addressed Israel-related antisemitism at **NYU** in a widely-published [op-ed article](#). "[Word Crimes: Reclaiming the Language of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#)," a special issue of Israel Studies co-authored by AEN Executive Director Miriam Elman, Scholars for Peace in the Middle East Executive Director Asaf Romirowsky, and Smith College professor Donna Divine, exposed the prevalence of censoring and perversion of terms in discussions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on college campuses. Last year, other AEN members similarly released a book with [first-hand accounts](#) of discrimination, exposing frequent antisemitism among anti-Israel faculty. At the **University of Maryland**, the academic network played a central role in opposing divisive BDS initiatives. After campus activists introduced an anti-Israel divestment resolution in student government in April 2019, Maryland professors supported a successful counter effort, launching a [faculty petition](#) that helped secure the measure's defeat.

The expansive efforts of pro-Israel students and joint collaboration across the pro-Israel movement are contributing to a stronger and more united pro-Israel front, rising to and overcoming the challenges posed by an increasingly sophisticated, vitriolic, and coordinated anti-Israel community.

BRINGING ISRAEL TO CAMPUS COMMUNITIES

While countering divisive campaigns, pro-Israel activists expanded campus outreach, showing fellow students the best of Israel. Campus activists countered disinformation, demonstrating Israel's strengths and global contributions. Organized trips to Israel achieved similar success, bringing diverse communities face-to-face with Israel's complex reality.

{ During the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 3,401 pro-Israel events on U.S. college campuses, representing a steady increase in pro-Israel events over the past two academic years. }



At **Cornell University**, pro-Israel students launched an innovative initiative to connect non-Jewish students with Israeli mentors. Called the [Start-Up Nation Mentorship](#), the ongoing program -- now in its third academic year -- pairs students with Israeli executives from a variety of global industries. While exposing participants to Israel, the program creates special opportunities for professional growth, matching students with experts in participants' chosen fields. In regular conversations with American students, Israeli mentors provide personalized guidance, offering advice on professional planning, networking, entrepreneurship, and other career-related topics. Beyond providing practical resources, Cornell's initiative fosters personal relationships, forging meaningful connections to Israeli society. Started in early 2018, the project now includes over 90 Israeli mentors, and has since expanded to eleven other campuses in the U.S., including **Princeton University, Yale University, Columbia University, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, University of Michigan, University of Chicago, Stanford University, UCLA, UC Berkeley**, and the **Culinary Institute of America**, and seven international colleges and universities, including **University of Toronto, McGill University, Oxford College**, and the **University of Melbourne**.



At **Columbia University**, Israel's supporters established a similar initiative to expand campus outreach. Since its founding several years ago, Columbia's [China-Israel Connection \(CIC\)](#) has strengthened ties between Israel-affiliated and China-affiliated students. According to the program's organizers, the initiative carries special value for both communities, nurturing a shared interest in Israeli culture and innovation. CIC facilitates internship opportunities worldwide -- hosting student fellowships in over 50 Israeli, Chinese, and U.S. companies -- and maintains independent funding to assist participating students. Like Cornell's initiative, Columbia's program has expanded to other leading campuses, establishing chapters at **Harvard University** and the **University of Pennsylvania**. In its campus-based events, the initiative focuses on Israel's start-up culture, holding regular programs on Israeli technology and entrepreneurship.



In an event held last May, pro-Israel students brought Israeli innovation to U.S. campuses, highlighting Israel's progress in diverse fields including medicine, technology, business, and humanitarian aid. Hosted by students at the **University of Chicago** and **Northwestern University**, the [Chicago Israel Summit](#) showcased Israel's strengths to local communities, inviting Chicago-based students and community members to interact with Israeli entrepreneurs. Throughout the summit, participants heard compelling stories from Israeli experts, whose work applies innovative strategies to increase employment, improve education, reduce housing shortages, and address humanitarian crises. Emphasizing pro-Israel cooperation across campuses, the initiative followed a [2018 summit at Harvard University](#), where students organized similar events highlighting Israeli ingenuity.

As campus activists strengthened outreach, pro-Israel organizations led similar efforts, hosting experiences in Israel for diverse student communities. By engaging Jewish and non-Jewish participants, organized trips as well as study abroad and academic exchanges introduced thousands of students to Israel, providing opportunities to experience Israeli history and culture first-hand. In recent years, professional groups expanded trips for American students. By allowing participants to see Israel for themselves, Israel's supporters countered false narratives, offering nuanced exposure to Israel's strengths and challenges.

**{ In 2018, more than
48,000 students
traveled to Israel
on Birthright. }**

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC COLLABORATION

Despite aggressive BDS campaigns on U.S. campuses, anti-Israel activists met little success in influencing college and university administrations. Throughout the past year, strong statements from institutional leaders demonstrated the value and effectiveness of pro-Israel outreach. Across the country, campus administrators defended Israel and Jewish students, renouncing anti-Israel efforts to divide campus communities.

In a letter to SJP activists last February, **Cornell University** President Martha Pollock [firmly rejected](#) anti-Israel divestment efforts. Referring generally to BDS, President Pollock conveyed her principled objection to anti-Israel boycotts, explaining that “BDS unfairly singles out one country in the world for sanction.” While criticizing SJP’s initiatives, President Pollock highlighted the group’s divisive influence, condemning “polarizing calls for divestment” on Cornell’s campus.

At **Pitzer College** last November, President Melvin Oliver [opposed](#) a faculty decision boycotting Pitzer’s student exchange program at the University of Haifa. Addressing Pitzer faculty and community members, President Oliver characterized BDS as “a repudiation of our educational mission,” “anathema to Pitzer’s core values,” and “a major blow to the reputation and reality of Pitzer College as a scholarly institution committed to its stated values of intercultural understanding.”

At the **University of Michigan**, administrators took similar positions against BDS, [censuring](#) a faculty member who denied recommendation letters to Israel study abroad participants. Defending academic freedom, the university [criticized](#) instructors who “would allow their personal political beliefs to limit the support they are willing to otherwise provide,” and clarified its opposition to “any boycott of Israeli institutions of higher education.” In April, the university accepted the [recommendation](#) of the Blue Ribbon Panel’s report that says faculty members “must base their actions solely on educational and professional reasons,” creating guidelines to prevent discrimination against students based on their affiliations, ideologies, or study abroad preferences. In the **University of California (UC)** system, university chancellors [unanimously rejected](#) Israel study abroad boycotts, describing BDS as “a direct and serious threat to the academic freedom of our students, as well as the unfettered exchange of ideas.”

At **Vassar College**, a student [noted](#) how the historically anti-Israel campus became more hospitable for Jewish students when President Elizabeth Bradley became the head of the college, stewarding a zero tolerance policy towards antisemitic anti-Zionist activity. The student reinforced the notion that Jewish students will flock to colleges and universities that take antisemitism seriously, while students [will flee](#) from campuses that enable antisemitism to fester.

As administrations affirmed support for Israel, colleges and universities strengthened ties to Israeli academic institutions. Last May, the **University of Miami** and the **Hebrew University of Jerusalem** launched an innovative [training partnership](#) focused on trauma medicine. In June, leaders from eight American colleges and universities visited Israel to [explore opportunities](#) for expanded collaboration. At **Tulane University**, Israel's supporters established a similar [project](#) to broaden U.S.-Israel energy research. On several other campuses — including **Cornell University**, **Drexel University**, the **University of Pennsylvania**, the **New York Institute of Technology**, the **Water Institute of the Gulf**, and at **UC system schools** — researchers initiated, renewed or deepened cooperation with Israeli partners abroad.

CONCLUSION

The 2018-2019 academic year marked a period of considerable change for Israel on college and university campuses. While Israel's supporters strengthened outreach and advocacy campaigns, anti-Israel activists intensified efforts to marginalize and intimidate the pro-Israel community. Amid growing frustration and protest activity on U.S. campuses, SJP and its allies escalated their attacks, leading targeted campaigns against pro-Israel students. The rise of anti-Semitism among anti-Israel groups — combined with tactics of deception and manipulation — presented significant challenges for Israel's supporters. At the same time, protracted anti-Israel initiatives created new obstacles for the pro-Israel campus movement. In the months ahead, pro-Israel students and campus professionals face a complex reality on U.S. campuses. As pro-Israel activists traverse this rapidly evolving landscape, ICC and its partners stand ready to support them.



**ISRAEL on
CAMPUS COALITION**