



The following resolution herewith has been proposed by the following parties:

Alexandra Ahdoot (Duke)  
Southeast Committee

Jewish on Campus supports efforts to address antisemitism that is continually endorsed by Duke University.

**Resolution 4:**  
**Guideline for Addressing Antisemitism Endorsed by Duke University**

## **Introduction**

The spread of antisemitism is rampant in universities worldwide, yet university administrations often do not take action to combat it. Recently, there have been various instances of Duke University's failure to condemn antisemitism. For example, Duke University has continually funded Professor Akram Khater and Kylie Broderick's "Understanding the Modern Middle East" course through the National Humanities Center, even though those leading the course have used it as a platform to make multiple one-sided and biased comments constituting antisemitism. Through its ongoing support and sponsorship of the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, Duke University has contributed to the perpetuation of this type of bigotry. Additionally, the recent decision by Duke's Student Government to uphold its veto on the school's Students Supporting Israel chapter has established a precedent for allowing antisemitic rhetoric while creating an unsafe environment for Jewish students and Israel supporters on campus. To properly address these incidents and foster a safe and welcoming environment for Jewish students at Duke, we support the following solutions, including critical policy changes to be adopted by the Duke University administration and student government and a withdrawal of funding to the National Humanities Center. These solutions aim to prevent future antisemitic acts by altering Duke's internal policies on such cases, starting with Duke Student Government (DSG)'s adoption of an internationally-recognized definition of antisemitism. As antisemitism is ever changing, identifying many events or speech as antisemitism becomes more difficult. DSG's adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition is non-binding and permits universities to better understand and identify such incidents.

## **Assumptions**

This has been endorsed based off the following assumptions:

- I. Freedom of speech is guaranteed within the United States, and such adoption would not prohibit persons from exercising such rights. However, it provides universities with the resources to identify whether said free speech entails antisemitism.
  - A. IHRA is not an enforcement or punishing tool, but rather one used for identification purposes. It is also not intended for the purpose of silencing students.
  - B. IHRA allows individuals to criticize Israel without crossing the line into antisemitism.
  - C. In many cases, protected speech may not constitute punishment or a Title VI violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, a guideline for

antisemitism permits universities to educate and better understand the climate on their campus.

- D. Conduct is punished, not the speech itself.
- II. Criticism of Israel is not necessarily antisemitic, and students will be permitted to do so. IHRA permits universities to understand when discourse extends beyond mere criticism and treads on antisemitism hereto:
  - A. Said criticism that demonizes Israel, Israelis, and Jews, placing harmful stereotypes, libels, and dehumanizing attitudes on such. Examples of this may include Holocaust inversion.
  - B. Said criticism that delegitimizes Israel as a state, arguing that it should not have a right to exist or should not be a Jewish nation.
  - C. Said criticism imposes a double standard on Israel, one of which would not be applied to other countries.

## **Articles**

### Article I: Implementation and Usage of IHRA for the Duke Student Government

- I. It is recommended that the Duke Student Government uses the IHRA definition of antisemitism as a standard and guideline for identifying antisemitism on campus.
  - A. The IHRA definition of antisemitism is as quoted below:
    - 1. *“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”*
    - 2. This definition is already in use by the U.S. Department of State and by approximately [30 colleges and universities](#) within the United States.
  - B. Examples of antisemitic incidents under this definition, as listed on the IHRA website, include:
    - 1. Making stereotypical statements against Jews, especially using common historical antisemitic tropes such as:
      - a) Claiming that Jews control the world, governments, banks, or other institutions
      - b) Blaming Jews for various historical events
      - c) Other classic antisemitism, such as the blood libel
    - 2. Denying the Holocaust or denying the seriousness of the Holocaust
    - 3. Accusing the Jewish people of dual loyalty and being more loyal to Israel than their own country
    - 4. “Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination”

5. See the [IHRA Resource website page](#) for more examples of antisemitism under this definition.
- II. Its usage is only for incidents regarding verbal or written speech, including but not limited to: student government discussions, social media posts, papers, speeches, and private and public conversations.
- III. Such a definition should be adopted by DSG and organizations involved in protecting and investigating the civil rights of students.
- IV. Duke may use this definition during diversity training and bias workshops.
- V. DSG should be mindful that antisemitism mutates and is ingrained within society. People may unintentionally perpetuate it. Education rather than punishment, under the guise of this definition, allows persons to understand the repercussions of their speech and promote better cultural awareness.

## Article II: Disciplining Clubs, Student Groups, and Individual Students for Antisemitic Conduct and Language

- I. The Duke administration, Duke Student Government, and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards must acknowledge the negative effects of antisemitic acts, particularly degrading and hurtful language, violence, and speech targeted at Jewish students when handling investigations of allegedly antisemitic acts and incidents.
  - A. Antisemitism creates an unsafe and hostile environment for Jewish students at Duke and at universities across America.
- II. Condemning the actions of individual students
  - A. The Duke University administration must publicly condemn the actions of students who actively take part in verbal or physical discriminatory actions against other Duke students following thorough investigation/s by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.
    1. Discriminatory actions include making inherently bigoted and threatening statements, posting on social media, or using classroom settings to target specific students and/or groups.
      - a) “Bigoted and threatening statements,” in this case, are defined as the expression of language on campus such as “Kill the Jews” or “Hitler was right about the Jews,” as well as false narratives that are threatening to students’ safety on campus.
    2. “Publicly condemn” is defined as sending a statement to all Duke students, faculty, and employees following the occurrence of any antisemitic actions or behaviors as described in this resolution. Such acts or incidents must be condemned in genuine terms.
- III. The Duke University administration must establish guidelines for student protection within school-sponsored clubs and groups.

- A. Discrimination against students in school-sponsored clubs and groups is to be defined as the specific bigoted or isolated targeting of certain students.
- B. Discrimination, whether physical, verbal, or via social media, is not tolerated in any form, whether initiated by or against any school-sponsored group.

### Article III: Withdrawal of Funding from the National Humanities Center

- I. The PhD student and professor who teach the “Understanding the Modern Middle East” course taught at the National Humanities Center have repeatedly made anti-Israel statements and other statements that are antisemitic.
  - A. Allowing this course to be taught again in the future by these two people, through funding the center that teaches this course, allows for this antisemitism to continue.
- II. The Duke University Middle East Studies Center must withdraw its funding from the National Humanities Center because this contributes to the perpetuation of antisemitism.
  - A. Funding this program appears as an endorsement of this course. The Duke Administration has adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, and yet they are funding a program whose course clearly violates that definition.

### Article IV: End Political Indoctrination in the Classroom

- I. Duke University and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards must adopt guidelines for both faculty and students on discussing politics especially relating to Israel in the classroom.
  - A. This subject includes but is not limited to Israel itself and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
    - 1. Criticism of the Israeli government is permitted, but cannot include antisemitic tropes or antisemitic language in order to create and maintain a safe space in the classroom for Jewish students at Duke University.
      - a) Antisemitic tropes may include delegitimizing the state of Israel, demonizing the state of Israel, and double standards against Jews and Israel.
  - B. Professors must not prevent a student from expressing a differing opinion, but they are expected to uphold classroom standards such as respect for all students.
    - 1. For example, students who express different views on Israel or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a respectful way cannot be silenced or removed from the classroom because of their opinions on these subjects.

- C. Demonization of Israel and Jews is not permitted.
  - 1. Including and not limited to Jews living in the diaspora (meaning, not in Israel, such as American Jews) and Israeli Jews (those who are currently living, have previously lived in Israel, and have Israeli citizenship).
  - 2. This is not a political disagreement but is instead antisemitism and does not allow Jewish students to feel safe in classroom spaces at Duke.
  - 3. Furthermore, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards must respond to and investigate, as necessary, any discrimination that Jewish students may face in the classroom.

Article V: Statement Pushing Duke Student Government to Charter a Students Supporting Israel (SSI) Chapter

- I. The Duke Student Government has unfairly held Duke's Students Supporting Israel chapter to a different standard than other groups on campus.
  - A. DSG vetoed SSI's right to be recognized on the premise that the group violated Title III, Section 3 of the Student Organization Finance Committee's official bylaws by failing to act in "good faith behavior." While the bylaws do state that recognized groups are "granted the right to use the Duke name," there is no line anywhere stating that this must be done in "good faith behavior."
    - 1. To Students Supporting Israel, condemning anti-Zionist rhetoric constituted acting in good faith behavior and is part of the group's mission on campus. The definition of good faith behavior is subjective, and therefore left open to interpretation.
    - 2. No other group on Duke's campus has ever been vetoed or denied its recognition because it did not act in "good faith behavior." This rule was made up by DSG as a way to justify its veto of SSI's existence.
  - B. DSG chartered a chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine and has not taken action to combat the group's actions which endanger Jewish and pro-Israel students on campus, thus applying a double standard.
    - 1. In a letter to the Duke Chronicle on November 16, 2021, SJP members made the claim that "Israeli advocacy fundamentally relies upon the settler-colonial strategies of conceptual distortion and pathological displacement to reaffirm the settler-colonial principles upon which Israel was founded."
      - a) These claims are not only unfactual, but discriminatory and antisemitic, as they deliberately delegitimize the nation of Israel and the Jewish people's right to self-determine there.

By adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism, DSG would be able to recognize these claims as antisemitic and could act accordingly towards SJP members.

Article VI: Creation of a Circulated Letter for Alumni Signatures

- I. A letter summarizing this resolution and requested actions from the Duke University administration will be sent to all Duke alumni to pressure the university to follow through with the requested action items.
- II. This letter will be written within the next week, and will collect signatures until two weeks after being sent to Duke University alumni.

Article VII: Jewish on Campus Journal Article

- I. An article is to be published in the Jewish on Campus Journal regarding this situation. It will be an investigative report in which details on the funding and course will be reviewed.

**Amendments**

- I. For Article IV, Section C: Changing the original text to include a better description for Demonization of Israel and Jews.
  - A. Original text: Demonization of Israel, Israeli Jews, or American Jews is not permitted.
  - B. Amended text: Demonization of Israel and Jews. Including and not limited to Jews living in the diaspora (meaning, not in Israel, such as American jews) and Israeli Jews (those who are currently living, have previously lived in Israel, and have Israeli citizenship).
- II. The Administration of Duke University must review and carry out the policies of Duke University in all meetings and decisions of student government, ensuring all definitions of antisemitism are upheld and not violated.
- III. Instead of mandating that the Duke University Middle East Studies Center (DUMESC) must withdraw its funding from the National Humanities Center, JOC can mandate that DUMESC have a meeting with NHC and explain to them their wrongdoings in regards to antisemitism and how they can right them. If NHC does not comply, DUMESC can threaten to pull funding from NHC.

**Voting**

27 Ambassadors voted “aye.” 0 voted “nay.” 1 abstained. 6 were not present. Voting occurred on 11/29/2021.

Representative of American Musical and  
Dramatic Academy, **Yea**

Representative of Barnard College/List  
College, **Yea**

Representative of Binghamton  
University, **Yea**

Representative of Boston University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Brandeis University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Brown University,  
**Absent**

Representative of California State  
University (Long Beach), **Yea**

Representative of Columbia University,  
**Absent**

Representative of Duke University, **Yea**

Representative of Georgia Institute of  
Technology, **Yea**

Representative of Middlebury College,  
**Absent**

Representative of Northern Michigan  
University, **Yea**

Representative of Northwestern  
University, **Yea**

Representative of Oregon State  
University, **Yea**

Representative of Queen's University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Ryerson University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Stanford University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Tufts University, **Yea**

Representative of University at Buffalo,  
**Yea**

Representative of University of  
California (San Diego), **Yea**

Representative of University of Chicago,  
**Yea**

Representative of University of Florida,  
**Yea**

Representative of University of Miami,  
**Absent**

Representative of University of  
Michigan, **Yea**

Representative of University of Notre  
Dame, **Yea**

Representative of University of  
Pennsylvania, **Absent**

Representative of University of  
Pittsburgh, **Abstain**



Representative of University of  
Vermont, **Yea**

Representative of Vanderbilt University,  
**Yea**

Representative of Vassar College, **Yea**

Representative of Wake Forest  
University, **Yea**

Representative of Washington  
University in St. Louis, **Yea**

Representative of West Virginia  
University, **Absent**

Representative of Western Washington  
University, **Yea**

### **Approval**

Approved by Rosemarie Goldstein and Hannah Siegel (Co-Presidents) 12.01.2021

Approved by Ruthy Attias, Ambassador Coordinator 12.01.2021

Approved by Jewish on Campus 12.01.2021