

Zachor Legal Sends Letter to Duke University Chastising Their Continued Antisemitism

Zachor Legal sent a letter to Duke following news that the student body government is engaging in discrimination on national origin, religion and ethnicity



BOZEMAN, MONTANA, USA, December 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Zachor](#)

[Legal Institute](#) sent a [letter to the](#)

[President of Duke University](#) following recent news reports regarding the university which

indicate that the student body government is engaging in targeted discrimination on the basis of national origin, religion and shared ethnicity. In particular, the student government has rejected the application of the organization Students Supporting Israel ("SSI"), a group of Jewish students who support the homeland of the indigenous people of the land of Israel, Jews.

This is less than three years after Duke signed a resolution agreement with the Department of Education committing to taking steps to protect Jewish students, necessitated after Duke co-sponsored a conference which included rampant antisemitism.

Excerpts from of the [Zachor Letter to Duke University](#):

The Duke student government is clearly discriminating against students who have sought approval for the creation of the SSI chapter on campus. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which applies to all institutions that receive federal funding (such as Duke), acts that target students on the basis of their national origin and religion, which includes shared ethnicity under controlling regulations for Title VI, are discriminatory. Further, the Duke PPDRHM (internal) policy explicitly refers to "perception of an individual's protected status".

The Duke student government has violated their own PPDRHM policy by withholding recognition of SSI solely because the members of the proposed SSI chapter are openly Zionist, which is a protected status under Title VI and, by the text of the PPDRHM, Duke's own policies. Other students who have organized to promote the interests of other middle eastern states and constituents have been allowed to form student groups on campus and there should be no difference in eligibility standards between the proposed SSI chapter and the other groups, like Students for Justice in Palestine, an organization that has clear and demonstrated ties to foreign

terror groups and one that spreads a toxic environment against Jewish students on campus, yet was allowed on campus.

A recent survey of Jewish students by the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law found that over 65% of survey respondents experienced or had knowledge of antisemitic acts on their campus and over 50% of survey respondents felt that there was such hostility against Jews, and in particular, Jews who identify with the Jewish homeland of Israel, that they actively hid their Jewish identities.

Furthermore, FBI data show that in 2020, almost 60% of all hate crimes that were based on religious bias targeted Jews.

Until recently there was no clear guidance from the federal government as to how to confront this dangerous, discriminatory movement that harms educational opportunities for all students, particularly those who are Jewish. Title VI has long prohibited discrimination on the basis of, inter alia, race and national origin, in federally funded programs, but there had been unresolved questions relating to how antisemitism in its various forms, especially antizionism, can be addressed by Title VI.

On December 11, 2019, these questions were answered with the issuance of the “Executive Order Combating Antisemitism”, which incorporated much of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, the de facto standard universally defining contemporary hate targeting Jews, into the enforcement mechanisms available to the Department of Education’s Title VI investigation and complaint resolution process.

The IHRA definition brings recognition of a relatively new form of antisemitism spreading on social media and in academic institutions: substituting antizionism (that is, the denial of the Jewish right to self-determination as the indigenous population of the land of Israel) for direct anti-Jewish incitement.

Indeed, the PPDHRM Policy explicitly incorporates the IHRA definition of antisemitism under the section titled “Examples of Prohibited Conduct”:

Antisemitic conduct implicates the Policy and can manifest in the University environment in a number of ways. IHRA defines antisemitism as “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.” Examples of antisemitic conduct that implicates this Policy include:

- Repeated instances of antisemitic slurs directed toward an individual, regardless of whether that individual is Jewish.
- Refusing to allow an individual to participate in any program sponsored or hosted by the

University because he or she is perceived to be from Israel, is associated with a Jewish organization, wears religious attire, like a kippah, or displays a religious symbol associated with Judaism, like a Star of David.

- Defacing a Jewish employee's or student's property with a hateful symbol such as a swastika.
- Using force or intimidation to obstruct the path of an employee or student because they are Jewish, perceived to be Jewish, or supportive of Jewish institutions or organizations.
- Refusing to grant a student some expected benefit, such as a letter of recommendation, based on the perception that the student is Jewish, is associated with a Jewish organization, or because that student is perceived to be from Israel.

Thus, it is clear to us that Duke has adopted the IHRA definition, which has been incorporated into Title VI, and is also subject to Title VI due to its receipt of federal funding. The acts of Duke's student government to discriminate against forming a chapter of SSI, Jewish Zionist students who wish to form an organization with a long history of providing support to Jewish Zionist students and contributing to each campus that it operates on, is not only a violation of Duke's own policies, it also likely constitutes a violation of Title VI if Duke's administration allows the discrimination to continue.

We urge you to override the student government's discriminatory rejection of the SSI chapter at Duke and further urge you to implement an educational program on campus to inform all students of the pernicious nature of all forms of antisemitism, including antizionism.

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