
REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Joint President-Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia



FALL 2024

CONTENTS

- 1 **Introduction: Task Force Mandate**
- 4 **The Task Force Path**
- 6 **Campus Experiences**
- 9 **Instances of Campus Tension**
- 15 **Campus Police Reports**
- 16 **Putting Incidents in Wider Context: Campus Belonging & Community Survey Findings**
- 25 **Existing University Rules, Programs, and Guidelines**
- 27 **Balancing Free Speech with Safety and a Culture of Understanding**
- 28 **Recommendations**
- 32 **Appendix 1** Joint Presidential-Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia Charge
- 35 **Appendix 2** University of Maryland Campus-Level Policies and Procedures Relevant to Antisemitism and Islamophobia
- 38 **Appendix 3** University of Maryland Campus-Level Resources for Safety and Security on Campus
- 40 **Appendix 4** Joint Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia MEMO

INTRODUCTION: Task Force Mandate

The past year has been difficult and painful for many on our campus, as members of the University of Maryland (UMD) community have watched from a distance the massive scale of casualties and suffering in Israel, Gaza, and beyond that continue to mount to the present moment. The traumatic loss of life and human agony caused by the attacks in Israel on October 7, 2023, and by the subsequent war in Gaza, coupled with the expansion of violence more broadly through the Middle East have caused distress and stimulated deep sympathy among many members of the campus community, whether they have personal relationships to people who are directly or indirectly impacted, or simply have felt moved by the depth of the tragedy. For some Arabs, Israelis, Jews, Muslims, and Palestinians on our campus,¹ these responses have been deepened by concern, sometimes accompanied by fear and feelings of helplessness, that current tensions could cause deep polarization, hostility, or outright violence on our campus.

In the context of these challenges, the President of the University of Maryland and the University Senate created the Joint Task Force (JTF) on Antisemitism and Islamophobia. The mandate of this Task Force is to address and assess the impact of antisemitic and Islamophobic acts and events on campus. It was made clear from the outset that the focus of our work is not on universal definitions of concepts but on the practical issues impacting our campus community, especially Jews (as well as Israelis, including those who may not be Jewish); and Muslims (as well as Arabs, including Palestinians, some of whom may not be Muslim).

In his charge to the JTF, University President Darryll J. Pines emphasized the focus of this mandate (See Appendix 1): “Recognizing the importance of fostering an environment of diversity, equity, inclusion and combating unlawful discrimination and harassment, the Joint President–University Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia **will examine applicable university policies and practices to identify areas for improvement. It will recommend actionable strategies to address and mitigate future hate-bias incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia.**”

The focus on our campus and the policies and practices of the University of Maryland in particular has provided the JTF with a clarifying perspective, one that is shaped by our awareness of the diversity of the UMD community. Home to about 6,000 Jewish undergraduates and 4,500 Muslim undergraduates (as well as many Arab students who are not Muslim and Israeli students who are not Jewish), the UMD campus has a responsibility to create a safe and welcoming space for learning and student development. This diversity is paralleled in the faculty, staff, graduate students, and other community members who are Arab, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian, and who wish to live, work, and learn in a space that is safe for religious, ethnic, and cultural minorities, and also safe for free speech and a pluralistic outlook. But the diversity of our University community goes well beyond Arab, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, or Palestinian, and the tensions of the current conflict affect us all: faculty members who teach related topics at a time when national polls

¹ This report pays particular attention to the experiences of Arabs, Israelis, Jews, Muslims, and Palestinians at the University of Maryland. After thoughtful discussion, the members of the Joint Task Force decided to use alphabetical listings to refer to these social groups. The choice to refer to antisemitism (lowercase and without a hyphen) and Islamophobia (uppercase) similarly resulted from a discussion of Task Force members in light of common convention.

have documented significant self-censorship on the part of scholars of Israeli-Palestinian subjects; graduate student instructors attempting to balance their responsibilities in the classroom and the limits on their personal expression; people in positions of responsibility who are thrust into a high-stress environment on issues they do not deal with regularly and with few resources to support them; and the many caring members of our University community who have been appalled and moved by the horrific loss of life and immense suffering in Gaza and Israel, regardless of their personal sympathies with either side of the conflict.

Universities are not islands. They are greatly impacted by the broader national and international environments around them. Our campus indeed has been impacted by a national conversation that is both polarized and political, colored by regular news reports of violent clashes at other institutions of higher education, concerns about a significant increase in [hate crimes](#) against Jews, Muslims, and Arab Americans, as well as high-profile congressional hearings that emphasize antisemitism on college campuses. Disagreements on international political issues also contribute to polarization on campus, especially given the United States government's significant military, financial, and diplomatic role on the Israeli-Palestinian issue and the Middle East more broadly.

On all sides of the conflict, many members of our campus community have loved ones who have suffered severely. Many have strong religious, ethnic, and ideational attachment to one side or the other. Each member and community at UMD must be equally protected, the rights of each member guarded in a manner that does not at the same time undermine the rights of another. It is especially in this spirit that our Task Force has appreciated the dual aim of understanding the climate on campus for both Muslims and Jews. Consideration of both communities, in conversation with one another, has shed greater light on each while generating insights that would have been unlikely under more limited circumstances. It has especially revealed the extent to which the issues are inevitably interconnected, and the need for our campus to assure that defending the rights of one community does not come at the expense of another.

University Mission and Character

Our work as a Task Force was guided by the University's [mission statement](#), which states that

to continue to realize its aspirations and fulfill its mandates, UMD nourishes a climate of intellectual growth and mutual respect, advances knowledge, and provides outstanding and innovative instruction in a broad range of academic disciplines and interdisciplinary fields. It strives for excellence in all of its activities, including academics, the performing arts, and intercollegiate athletics. UMD strives to support a healthy, diverse, and united student community that is committed to common values of scholarship, service, and philanthropy and that actively combats toxic cultures marked by unfair exclusion and abuse.

The diversity of UMD is a celebrated part of campus character. The lodestar of any academic community, and certainly ours, is a commitment to free speech, which is essential for protecting its vibrant diversity. It is with this value in mind that the University has chosen not to create or impose a

speech code on campus (Office of General Counsel, "[Freedom of Speech on Campus](#)"), observing that, "History shows that marginalized communities have successfully promoted their interests because of the right to express their views. In fact, marginalized communities have been silenced by speech codes and other regulations against 'offensive' speech."

At the same time,

while free speech and expression is a constitutional right, it is not boundless and should be weighed with its impact on others. [University policy](#) does not allow for individuals to obstruct, disrupt, interrupt, or attempt to force the cancellation of any program, event, lecture, or seminar hosted by the university or those authorized to use our spaces. No one is permitted to disrupt campus operations or our ability to move about, or engage in unlawfully harassing, physically abusive, threatening, or lewd or obscene conduct toward any person. In the state of Maryland, disruptive activities and behavior may also be subject to criminal charges (Darryll J. Pines, "[Valuing Freedom of Expression](#)").

Rules intended to guard the rights of every member of our community must be followed and violators must be held accountable. At the same time, the principal mission of universities is one of advancing knowledge, fostering intellectual curiosity, and supporting the development of critical thinking. Universities are entrusted with young people at critical stages of their lives, at a time when they are exploring possibilities far beyond what they may have experienced before. Some will occasionally err, as mistakes are an inevitable part of learning. Except in extreme cases of crime, they deserve compassion and guidance, not stigmatization that leaves them exposed and vulnerable, undermining their future.

Grasping the Moment

We must start with understanding, both emotional and intellectual. Times of crisis create highly polarized environments, especially with one or both sides perceiving the threat they or their communities face to be existential, as has been the case in the war in Israel and Gaza in recent months. This entrenchment is further intensified when both sides have decades-old histories of struggle and bloodshed, which have resulted in traumas that exacerbate the fear of the moment. In the face of death and destruction, it is natural to focus on one's own suffering, as hearts harden, and demonization of others becomes commonplace. Dialogue and mutual understanding are part and parcel of the culture we aspire to cultivate, especially in the face of painful discord. At the same time, we understand that, especially in the heat of a crisis, such dialogue may not be easy or even possible. Understanding starts by giving those in pain the space, the time, the right, to mourn those they love, to empathize with those with whom they identify, to be who they are.

The Task Force Path

ON **JANUARY 31, 2024**, the Joint Task Force (JTF) – made up of 26 members of the University community, including faculty, staff, undergraduates, and graduate students, including two co-chairs, all selected by the University President and Senate – was charged by President Pines (see Appendix 1). He encouraged the Task Force to work under the broader umbrella of the University’s TerrapinSTRONG initiative and requested that all members be in fellowship around the confidentiality of the work process.

The chairs of the JTF created four subcommittees whose members met in person the following week to outline the work that they would be undertaking. These subcommittees were tasked with addressing four aspects, respectively: UMD policies and procedures; campus safety and security; the current climate on campus; and campus engagement. The subcommittees created their own work schedules, which included weekly discussions, interviews with relevant members of the campus community, and analysis of the data they collected.

ON **FEBRUARY 16**, the members of the Joint Task Force met and discussed their own experiences on campus in light of the events of the past semester. Members expressed concern about tensions on campus and articulated the desire to create an atmosphere in which all members of the community could feel safe and learn from one another. Multiple participants emphasized the need for support of students, especially noting the fear felt by Israeli and Jewish students and the erasure experienced by Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian students on campus. The needs of staff and faculty across campus units were also highlighted. While this discussion was grounded in the events of the past six months, several longer-term concerns arose: the ongoing mental health crisis among students and other members of the campus community, and the need for attention to religious, ethnic, and cultural identity as facets of diversity on campus.

ON **MARCH 1**, the Task Force met with three campus chaplains: Rabbi Ari Israel (UMD Hillel), Father Conrad Murphy (Catholic Student Center, UMD), and Imam Tarif Shraim (Center for Muslim Life at Maryland). In addition to highlighting the need for empathy – and a greater respect for religion on campus – this discussion introduced the Task Force to the useful distinction between experiences of being uncomfortable, unwelcome, and unsafe. Experiences of intellectual discomfort are intrinsic to the nature of a college campus, and personal discomfort, too, is a necessary aspect of living in a community that values free speech. For members of the community to feel unwelcome or indeed unsafe, in contrast, raises concerns.

At the **MARCH 13** meeting, the Task Force subcommittees provided an initial report on their work, which included identifying current policies and structures relevant to campus safety, diversity, antisemitism, and Islamophobia. The findings of the subcommittees are discussed at length below.

The **MARCH 29 AND APRIL 8** Task Force meetings focused on student experience, with presentations by Patty Perillo (vice president for student affairs) and multiple student speakers. This session emphasized for Task Force members the extremely high stakes and high tension of the current moment, as well as the importance of recognizing the range and depth of distinct experiences and views on campus. The Task Force took away from this session a new focus on the need to think in terms of competing truths and fundamentally conflicting narratives, rather than viewing ongoing conflicts as a matter of misunderstanding or ignorance.

The **APRIL 8** meeting also included discussions of faculty experiences on campus. While the general sense was that faculty experiences at UMD are better than those at some other campuses, faculty spoke of the need to self-censor, of feelings of walking on eggshells, and of a cooling of relationships with longtime colleagues around responses to the current conflict. Some Jewish and Muslim faculty members expressed concern about their own visibility (for example, in terms of wearing religious or cultural symbols on campus). A major source of tension among faculty centered on the publication of letters and statements (discussed further below). Other concerns centered on organized protests by parents, alumni, or others off campus.

The **APRIL 26** meeting was held during the period of active sit-ins on campus, which provided the Task Force with an opportunity to think about the immediate and practical implications of our work, while engaging with reports from the subcommittees on their work. As in earlier meetings, members of the Task Force were impressed with the choices of students and the University administration, while recognizing a level of tension on campus that is unprecedented in recent history.

At the **MAY 8** meeting of the task force, Dean Susan Rivera (College of Behavioral and Social Sciences) and Dean Stephanie Shonekan (College of Arts and Humanities) discussed the current campus atmosphere from the perspective of the academic administration. They noted that their faculty members, many of whom engage in scholarship on topics relevant to the current conflict, are feeling intense stresses in light of current circumstances.

The **MAY 24** meeting comprised presentations on Islamophobia by Professor Sahar Aziz (Rutgers University Law School) and on antisemitism by Associate Professor Maxine Grossman (director of the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Program and Center for Jewish Studies at UMD and co-chair of the JTF). Elements of their presentations are discussed at greater length below, but certain observations were common to both presentations. Chief among these was the need to recognize the generational trauma experienced not only by Jews and Israelis on campus but also by Arabs (including Palestinians) and Muslims. Task Force members emphasized that disagreements need to be acknowledged and cannot be reduced to a common denominator, which in turn requires addressing the question of how to hold discourse together while allowing for quite painful and uncomfortable conflict.

On **JUNE 6**, the Task Force welcomed Frederick Lawrence, former president of Brandeis University, who spoke on the nuances of free speech in academic settings. Like other speakers, he engaged with the concept of safety on campus, while urging the Task Force to highlight the nuance of this concept: intellectual safety is not something to be sought, but community members need to be physically safe to benefit from being intellectually challenged. We also heard from Jen Gartner, deputy general counsel at UMD (and a member of the JTF) about University policies regarding free speech.

Separately, the subcommittees held regular meetings – on their own, sometimes with the JTF co-chairs, and also with each other – to coordinate and report their findings. Lead members of each subcommittee served as part of the JTF drafting committee.

The work of the Task Force after June 6, including both formal meetings and informal discussions, focused on an assessment of campus climate and structures of support for religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity, as

we anticipated access to preliminary data from the University climate survey. The co-chairs continued to meet at least once weekly, including during the summer, and to hold follow-up meetings with University faith leaders.

In what follows, we present our findings and recommendations to the University community.

Campus Experiences

The responsibilities of the Joint Task Force included understanding, assessment, and recommendation. The first, and perhaps most difficult responsibility was to gain an understanding of the experiences of the campus community – individuals, groups, and the campus as a whole -- in response to the ongoing war in Israel and Gaza. The focus of this understanding was not on the larger geopolitical conflict but rather on the experience of people on campus and especially their ability to speak freely about the sadness, anger, and frustration that they were feeling. Focusing on campus experiences allowed the Joint Task Force to think in practical and meaningful ways about the challenge of giving space to one another and respecting differences among members of the campus community, even in cases where those differences seem intractable and potentially hostile. The assessment of the current state of affairs on campus showed that protests on campus have been within the standards of free speech and communal norms, and counter-protests have also been within those boundaries. This does not mean that the experience has been easy. Many community members have felt alienated, disrespected, and fearful at times over the past year, and others have felt unseen and unheard as they attempted to carve out a meaningful response to extraordinary suffering that has sometimes been presented as comprehensively binary. Following a discussion of the atmosphere on campus and the events that have contributed to it, this report will conclude with recommendations for future actions.

Pain and Grief, Discomfort Versus Safety

The testimony provided to the Task Force by students, faith leaders, subject experts, and other guests reflected a notable degree of pain and grief. If Task Force members came away from this testimony with one overarching message, it was a reminder of the suffering that many members of the campus community have felt for the past year and continue to feel for friends, family members, and people far outside their own everyday circles.

One of the important distinctions that became clear to the Task Force, both from expert testimony and our own discussions, was between the experience of feeling uncomfortable and that of feeling physically threatened and unsafe. The University has a responsibility to keep all members of the campus community safe from harm or imminent threats of any kind. Indeed, as one of our free speech experts framed it, “you need to be physically safe to be intellectually challenged.” At the same time, as an institution whose mission encompasses intellectual growth for all participants, a commitment to engaging with unsettling or uncomfortable facts and ideas is necessary. To address conflicts without making others feel unsafe requires

high standards of collegiality and pluralism. In return, community members must expect and be willing to feel uncomfortable and to see their fundamental assumptions challenged.

In our meetings, the JTF heard about broader sources of concern that go well beyond our campus, elevating the fears especially of many Jews and Muslims in times of pain and crisis, as we have all witnessed over much of the past year. These reports and viewpoints came from the testimony of and conversations with University faith leaders; presentations from members of our community; and expert talks on Jewish and Muslim perceptions of antisemitism and Islamophobia. The testimony we heard was detailed and powerful, and it made apparent that neither Jewish/Israeli nor Muslim/Arab members of our community, or beyond, are monolithic in the way they define themselves, view antisemitism and Islamophobia, or take positions on conflicts in Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel.

The Context of Fear Goes Beyond the Ongoing War

The JTF heard a presentation on antisemitism that noted that many Jewish members of the UMD community experienced the attacks of October 7 in the context of larger fears about rising antisemitic incidents in the United States. Over the last decade, American Jewish communities have been shaken by a series of shocking antisemitic events, including the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, VA (August 2017), the fatal attacks at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh (October 2018), and a similar attack in Poway, California, exactly six months later. Random attacks on Jewish people – or people perceived to be Jewish – have also caused fear and distress among American Jews. Organized responses to these attacks – including a massive and costly effort to increase security in synagogues and other communal buildings – were accompanied by disappointment and disbelief that such responses were even necessary.

The events of October 7 were also experienced by many Jews in the context of a shared history of trauma. Both on campus and beyond, Jewish community members saw in the violence of October 7 an example of Jewish death and suffering unmatched since – and consequently evocative of – the Nazi Holocaust.

The interconnections that many Jewish Americans make between controversies over Zionism and threats to Israel was also an important aspect of this presentation. The concept of “Israel” is central to many modern Jews, and the modern state of Israel is only one facet of that larger relationship. The term itself can be a religious reference to an ancient people (“the children of Israel,” “the Israelites”) but also serves as a collective religious designation for many Jews today. For some of our Jewish speakers, this understanding of Israel is the basis for a theological or communal appeal to Zionism, which they define as “the enduring desire of the Jewish people to live safely in their ancestral homeland.” This in turn can make anti-Zionism feel to many Jewish people like a larger threat to Jews and their well-being. American Jews vary widely in their tolerance for criticism of the state of Israel, but most share a desire that Israel’s existence as a Jewish state be acknowledged and not be challenged.

This fear of antisemitism and its consequences has shaped the way many Jews understand the war in Gaza and its implications on the American national conversation. Many Jewish Americans, on campus

and elsewhere, are experiencing a lingering fear that the deep anger expressed toward Israel over its Gaza actions may harbor or turn into a hatred of Jews or violence against Jews more generally, even if that may not be the intent of those protesting Israeli military actions.

The JTF also heard testimony, as well as member interventions, about the broader context of fears experienced by many Arab and Muslim Americans. The historical context for the experience of Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian students is important for an understanding of their experience on campus today. The majority of today's undergraduates were born after 2001 and have lived their entire lives in a legal, cultural, and societal frame that has the capacity to paint Arabs and Muslims as variously foreign, unwelcome, or potentially dangerous. Numerous students shared experiences of being labeled terrorists or terrorist sympathizers and experiencing ridicule for their religion, culture, or national origin. As explained by some of our speakers, having developed a relatively high tolerance for such behavior, these students are less likely to report hostile incidents or demand redress, as they have come to see their predicaments as a fact of life or fear their complaints would go unheard or result in backlash or sanctioning.

A related concern raised by one expert speaker was the assumption by some people that Arabs, Muslims, and Palestinians are likely antisemitic, especially when they defend the rights of Palestinians or comment on the humanitarian crises that are offshoots of the current war. This implied accusation, the speaker argued, is in itself an Islamophobic generalization and creates a starting point of distrust rather than respect. The requirement that academic supporters of Palestine begin with the acknowledgment that "Israel has a right to exist," the speaker noted, is a limit on intellectual freedom, grounded in unfair assumptions. In addition, it was noted, it is not accompanied by a parallel demand to begin by acknowledging Palestinian indigeneity and rights to a Palestinian state in their land, even as some variants of Zionism reject that Palestinians belong or are entitled to equal rights.

The discussion of national legitimacy reveals deep undercurrents of fear and anxiety on all sides of the current conflict; recognizing the convictions and fears expressed by the different segments of our community is central to nurturing an environment of intellectual and emotional understanding even while recognizing that issues of sovereignty and territorial claims in international relations are normally arbitrated through international organizations, especially the United Nations Security Council.

For Arabs, Muslims, and Palestinians in the UMD community, fears of physical violence have been equally concerning. In light of the current conflict and the large-scale humanitarian crisis in Gaza that has gone unchecked, many on campus worry about a dehumanization of Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims here in America as well. Violent attacks on Palestinian Americans have included the shooting of three Palestinian students walking home from a Thanksgiving dinner in Burlington, Vermont (November 2023) as well as the murder of a six-year-old boy in Illinois in October 2023 and the attempted murder of a three-year-old girl in Texas in May 2024.

Instances of Campus Tension

We begin by describing some instances of tension on campus that have been reported either publicly or directly to us. We recognize that this is by no means a comprehensive treatment. The purpose of this section is to provide a sample of the issues and behavior that have led to discomfort or tension among segments of the campus community. To gain a more accurate measure of the prevalence of discomfort among our entire campus community, including students, staff, and faculty, we will follow with analysis of data from a campus-wide survey, which will enable us to place these reports in a broader context.

Campus Housing

For the 11,500 undergraduates living on campus and in campus-partnership housing, the University is not only a place of learning but in fact a home. Numerous students have reported experiencing tension and conflicts with fellow students in university housing, in contexts that are often anonymous and asynchronous. Residence Hall “whiteboards” (dry-erase boards hung on many students’ doors) are ready targets for hostile graffiti, back-and-forth arguments, and even harassment. Such behavior creates discomfort, but it also has the potential to make some students feel unsafe. Police reported at least one hate bias incident of a swastika being posted on a whiteboard in the past year. Because such incidents have also occurred in previous years, it is unclear whether these incidents were directly related to the war in Gaza.

Off-campus students have also experienced tension with neighbors and passersby. In one incident this past April, a group of about seven people walking on a street south of campus passed an upper-story apartment with an Israeli flag hung from its balcony. On a video recorded from the apartment, members of the group can be heard shouting, “Ceasefire, Now!” and “Free Palestine!” but also – once – “F--- Jews!”

Classroom Climate

Academic classrooms have also been a place of tension in the past year, as faculty and students negotiate discussions of challenging topics in light of sometimes contradictory expectations. Some tensions should not be surprising: students in classes whose subject matter directly relates to Jewish or Islamic Studies, Israel Studies, Middle East Studies, or other similar fields must expect to confront data, interpretations, and arguments that are unfamiliar and which they might find challenging, hostile, or even unfair. In classes on topics of less direct focus, students and faculty alike experienced challenges around the questions of relevance and appropriateness. Should faculty speak out about current circumstances in their classes, even if their subject matter is not directly related? The issue is especially sensitive for instructors whose fields embrace a professional model of scholar-activism. In late October, the College of Arts and Humanities sponsored a graduate student Zoom forum, “Teaching During Challenging Times,” in which instructors explored precisely these challenges and discussed some ideas for managing them in the classroom.

A particular concern for some faculty members is the worry that support for Palestine could impact their careers, given numerous past and current documented cases of censure and sanctioning of faculty by U.S. universities, as well as doxing and intimidation by outside groups for faculty who are perceived to express pro-Palestinian views at U.S. universities. Nationwide, faculty self-censorship on the Israeli Palestinian issue has been documented on both sides, and we have heard such concerns expressed by UMD faculty with a variety of political perspectives.

Over the course of the academic year, the University received a handful of complaints related to the classroom, including several complaints about instructor comments in class, the content of PowerPoint slides, or matters related to attendance and extra credit assignments for attendance at a pro-Israel rally. All reported incidents were investigated and addressed by UMD in accordance with its applicable policies and procedures.

Professional Atmosphere

The University is a space for education but also a place of employment, and the experience of campus staff members deserves our unique focus. Staff and administrators, whose role on campus is usually not measured in credit hours or even semesters, come to the University each day to do their jobs, develop their professional careers, and be part of a fulfilling workplace environment. Their needs and interests are not always the same as those of faculty and students, and their tenure on campus can last much longer.

The JTF has heard ubiquitous concerns about “silencing” in campus professional spaces. Supporters of both Israeli and Palestinian causes as well as some people who identify as Arab, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, or Palestinian have felt a distinct “cooling” in their workplace communities. Faculty and staff across academic departments and in the libraries have spoken to a sense of tension with long-time colleagues and a general difficulty in discussing facts, opinions, or interpretations of ongoing events. In some cases, the pain is too great. In others, the trust is not there. Still others find the entire discussion uncomfortable.

Another challenge for university staff, especially those in high-profile administrative positions, is the sudden burden of unfamiliar pressures for which they are unprepared. Campus offices have been inundated with thousands of communications from all sides, on issues that are complex and may be completely unrelated to staff members’ regular responsibilities. The added stress and time commitment that result from such experiences can impact both staff morale and the professional atmosphere in which they work.

Campus Activism and Sharing Public Spaces

Campus activism on the Palestinian-Israeli issue has a history that long precedes October 7, as the conflict has been ongoing for decades. Pro-Palestinian groups, for example, have engaged in a Boycott Israel Fest each year in response to the annual Israel Fest event, which celebrates Israeli culture and the founding of the state of Israel. But the past year witnessed new levels of intensity by both pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian groups.

Throughout the past year, and especially during the period of intense public tension in the last months of the spring semester, the University of Maryland has been a model for public civility. Civility has not meant an absence of tensions, or even an atmosphere of quiet, but rather a management of those tensions and a generalized commitment to civil engagement and avoidance of conflict whenever possible.

In the period following October 7 and the start of the war in Gaza, the University saw a number of formal and informal public gatherings. A memorial vigil for the victims of the October 7 assault was attended by about 1,000 people, including President Pines, who spoke at the event (October 9, 2023; [“UMD community members gather”](#)). A similar vigil in support of Palestine drew about 200 people to McKeldin Mall later the same week (October 12, 2023, [“UMD students hold vigil”](#)). A walkout organized by Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) later in the month drew more than 300 people, who participated in both a march at McKeldin Mall and a subsequent campus rally (October 31, 2023; [“Hundreds protest”](#)). Terps for Israel hosted a “Day of Kindness” event on Hornbake Plaza the same day ([“Hundreds protest”](#)).

Public discourse in the form of letters and statements also drew attention on campus this year. Multiple letters by groups of faculty members (e.g., [“On the Israel and Palestine Issue”](#); [“Letter to the Editor”](#)), and additional public statements by academic units, argued variously for the support of Palestine, Israel, and the right to engage in public critique ([“UMD community members author multiple letters”](#)). Tension arose among some faculty members about the tone of these letters and their potential impact on the campus atmosphere. Student supporters of Palestine also expressed worries that they might be graded unfairly if they took classes with professors who signed one pro-Israel letter.

The first SJP sit-in took place in Hornbake Plaza (November 9, 2023; [“UMD community members call”](#)), which was the site of multiple pro-Palestine demonstrations from November 2023 until late spring 2024. Hornbake Plaza and McKeldin Mall have been designated by University administration as the two free-speech areas on campus.

This first sit-in attracted public attention not only for its crowd of 350 participants, but also because of two brief moments captured and shared widely on social media. The first of these concerned a brief conversation between supporters of Israel and supporters of Palestine, who met after the rally and chatted briefly together. A photo of the exchange, widely spread across social media, highlighted the potential for civility in times of conflict.

The other image, which was spread equally widely, created a different impression. At the rally, whose chants included “Free, free Palestine!” and “Ceasefire Now,” students chalked messages in support of Palestinians, including the phrase “Holocaust 2.0.” The Holocaust message – which was written by one protestor and shortly afterward erased by leaders of the protest – was understood by protestors and many on campus to refer to Palestinians as victims and not as a threatening gesture toward Jewish people. Others on campus, however, viewed the statement as a reference to the Nazi Holocaust, and it was widely distributed on social media through early 2024, where it was often understood in this way.

One measure of campus tension is the increase in reports to the University’s Bias Incident Support Service office. BISS had received 112 incident reports by the end of November 2023 (in contrast with only 30

incidents in the same period the previous year; “[UMD sees 46 hate bias incident reports](#)”). None of these reports reflected open violent clashes.

Another measure of the campus atmosphere is the level of criticism of some campus policies. Pro-Palestine activists, in particular, expressed frustration during the spring semester with policies designed to limit the location of protest actions and especially the permissible location for chalking messages on campus (reduced during the year to two specific spots on campus). The JTF also heard complaints that reports about pro-Palestine chalking led to premature erasure of chalked messages.

Early 2024 saw more events and protests on campus, including a January 24 vigil in which 3,000 white flags were placed on McKeldin Mall to commemorate the Palestinians killed in the war in Gaza (“[UMD student groups](#)”). By late February, Hornbake Mall became a regular site for pro-Palestinian demonstrations, hosted by SJP, Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP), and a coalition of student organizations calling for an end to violence in Gaza and the University’s divestment from corporations that are benefiting from what they believe to be the oppression and indiscriminate killing of Palestinians.

The events on Hornbake Mall complied with University policies regarding location and type of protest. However, for students whose spring semester classes met in the buildings on that quad, there was no alternative path to class. When asked about their experiences, some Jewish and Israeli students expressed discomfort, and some expressed distress. All were clear that the situation did not reflect an imminent danger to them physically, but a significant number found the experience unwelcome and disturbing.

The period of greatest tension on campuses across the country began in mid-April, with a national movement of pro-Palestine encampments and sit-ins. University of Maryland’s sit-in began on Monday, April 22 (“[UMD community members](#)”), with a rally and march on McKeldin Mall. Unlike encampments at schools including UCLA, Columbia University, and neighboring GWU, the sit-in at the University of Maryland followed University regulations regarding time, location, and manner of protest and took the form of daytime sit-ins, rather than overnight encampments. The implications of this choice are worth noting: the UMD sit-in had a safer atmosphere, required less security support, and was less attractive to non-campus participants. Students predominated at the sit-ins, which included both active rallies and periods when participants simply sat and spent time together.

The sit-ins continued through early May, largely on the lower portion of McKeldin Mall, opposite the Miller Administration Building. An exception was on May 7, when pro-Israel supporters had reserved the lower portion of McKeldin Mall for their annual Israel Fest. Members of the pro-Palestine sit-in moved to the public space in front of McKeldin Library that day, for their annual Boycott Israel Fest event. Some sit-in participants expressed frustration about the need to move and also about the tight quarters available to them. Both groups experienced heavy security, with bag checks and screenings required for entry to each area.

A source of tension among protestors on both sides was the use of language that was perceived as knowingly hurtful. On many instances, including while protesting, student supporters of Palestine have been called “terrorist” or other similar epithets. There were also instances where pro-Palestine protestors encountered dismissal of mass Palestinian civilian casualties.

One of the contested expressions was the phrase, “From the River to the Sea,” (often accompanied by “Palestine will be free” when used by pro-Palestinian protesters) to refer to the entirety of the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel. This phrase is used by different people in quite different ways: sometimes simply as a description of the entirety of the territory, sometimes as a call for freedom for Palestinians within that territory, and sometimes – in statements made by both Palestinians and Israelis -- to refer to aspirations of exclusive Palestinian or Jewish sovereignty over the territory. What was clear from the presentations we heard was that, regardless of these potential interpretations, for many supporters of Israel, the phrase is seen as calling for exclusive Palestinian sovereignty, with Israel ceasing to exist as a Jewish state.

Beyond protests, pro-Palestinian students also pursued a University divestment proposal this year; although it should be noted that similar proposals have been made long before the fighting of the past year. In late spring 2024, the University of Maryland SGA considered a divestment proposal calling upon the University System of Maryland Foundation to divest from “companies engaged in human rights violations” (“[UMD SGA fails to advance](#)”). The general body meeting where the proposal was discussed included two hours of public comment, with more than 50 student testimonies, according to *The Diamondback* (“[UMD SGA fails to advance](#)”). The proposal, initially defeated in committee, did not go up for a full vote at the time. Instead, the resolution was defeated by a vote to uphold the initial unfavorable report (18–17, with one abstention).

A variety of educational programs provided space for academic and intellectual discussion of the current crisis. The Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn Institute for Israel Studies sponsored eight events related to the war over the course of the past two semesters, including “The Israel Hamas War: A Special Webinar” (October 16, 2023) and events exploring education, the media, culture, and the environment in light of the war. The History Department, the Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, the Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development, and the Bahai Chair for World Peace, among other units on campus, sponsored events on related topics. In addition, a non-departmental faculty-sponsored “Palestine teach-in” included a series of film events, lectures, and reading groups that took place during the Spring 2024 semester. These events took place without reported incidents.

A notable exception to the general pattern occurred on March 28 in a context ostensibly unrelated to Palestine, Israel, or the war (“Student protestors interrupt”). Invited by the Department of Physics to give the 2024 Irving and Renee Milchberg Endowed Lecture, U.S. Representative Jamie Raskin (D-Md.) was shouted down by protestors in the audience critical of his position on U.S. support for Israel. Raskin initially abandoned his speech and offered to hold a question-and-answer session, but after continued protests the event was canceled.

As classes resumed in Fall 2024, pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli student groups planned events for October 7, the anniversary of the attack on Israel and the start of the current war. The University’s authorization of a pro-Palestinian vigil on McKeldin Mall on October 7 was met with significant opposition from supporters of Israel on campus, who found the choice of date offensive. A significant volume of criticism also came from outside the University and included apparent threats to the safety of the event. In response to the situation, the University president, together with the University System of Maryland chancellor, decided to disallow any events on that day, except official university events, invoking security fears. A U.S. court found

that the decision violated the students' constitutional rights and [ordered the University to allow the pro-Palestinian events](#), as long as they followed specific guidelines. [Both pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli events](#) were ultimately [held](#) on October 7. No security incidents resulted.

Our general sense is that the University has been active in its prevention of violence and firm in stating the rules of protest, while engaging with student groups on all sides of the issues in an effort to be responsive to their legitimate requests. The University of Maryland Police Department (UMPD) has taken a central role in this process, as has the administration of the Stamp Student Union, who created a protocol for student demonstrations in response to current circumstances and who field a volunteer Free Expression Response Team at all major protests. Nonetheless, some students and faculty members, especially faculty of color, have expressed discomfort and apprehension about visible police presence on campus, especially when accompanied by unclear messaging about the reason and duration of their presence. In addition, the University has incurred substantial additional costs to provide security for protests and other related events on campus.

External Pressures

As discussed later in this report, recent campus surveys provide evidence for an important insight: although faculty, staff, and students across campus generally feel comfortable within their departments, classes, or campus communities, they express greater discomfort when thinking about campus "at large." This concern about outer social circles and spaces of greater anonymity is both interesting and relevant to our experiences at UMD in the past year. To a great extent, it is pressure from off campus that has brought the greatest tension into the campus community.

The feelings of deep concern that have troubled many people on our campus in the past year are in part the product of violence and conflicts grounded in other places. The war in Gaza and Israel itself has traumatized some members of the UMD community, and generated understandable fears. But another cause of tension on our campus is a general concern about how *other* campuses are responding to the situation. UMD faculty and administrators regularly receive emails and phone calls from people whose concerns about UMD are largely rooted in the stories they have heard about other campuses, other protests, and violence and tensions in other circles, or as a result of isolated but highly reported episodes on our own campus. UMD is not immune to such challenges, but neither has our campus seen the kinds of crises that some others have famously experienced.

Keeping in mind the vast diversity of the Jewish and Muslim populations on campus, we have nevertheless heard of specific worries that predominate among some members of the campus community. Many Jewish students and supporters of Israel have expressed fears that anti-Israel sentiment may really be a coded message of antisemitism, and that criticisms of Israel are the start of a path that poses an existential threat to Israel. Some pro-Palestine students fear being silenced for stating that what is happening in Gaza amounts to genocide against Palestinians, and believe that the accusation of antisemitism is intended to silence them when defending Palestinian rights and criticizing Israeli policies. To some, this silencing too feels personal and deeply threatening. Accounts of doxing, harassment, and job loss at other institutions create a deep and

real fear among supporters of Palestine that they may be the next to be harassed, assaulted, or find their careers ruined.

An example of precisely this tension was evident at the pro-Palestine sit-ins in April and May of this year, including on one occasion when a message passed through the crowd, alerting participants to the presence of someone walking around and filming on a smartphone. Several organizers passed out KN-95 masks, which some but not all of the protestors took. Those who chose to mask did so out of an explicit concern that their image would be broadcast to an audience that might in turn do them personal or professional harm.

Fear may also be the driving component for the groups of parents, alumni, and University supporters who form groups on social media, over email, and through WhatsApp to inform one another about what they perceive to be antisemitic threats on campus and beyond. A representative Facebook group with more than 60,000 members routinely calls upon members to write or call specific universities to respond to incidents of antisemitism. The outcomes of their actions are mixed: while the University has taken such writing or calling campaigns seriously, the rush of correspondence can easily overwhelm University staff and administrators.

Campus Police Reports

The campus police reported nine pro-Israel and 12 pro-Palestine events between October 7, 2023, and October 28, 2024 (see Appendix 4). “To date, both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine organizations have remained generally compliant with agreed upon guidelines relating to time, space, sound, as well as other conduct-related requirements for scheduled events on campus. Absent any intervention by the Free Expression Team, UMPD has not referred any individuals or organizations to the UMD Office of Student Conduct or witnessed any criminal violations requiring enforcement at these free-expression events. Frequently, individuals with opposing views have expressed themselves at scheduled events, with none rising to the level of criminal violations or requiring remarkable actions by UMPD.”

UMPD also shared the number and nature of hate/bias reports or reports with hate/bias indicators as determined by the State of Maryland and reported to the state by UMPD records manager. For comparison, there were two anti-Jewish hate/bias reports in 2022, one involving a swastika on a bulletin board and one involving “no Jews” written on a restaurant sign. In 2023 there was one incident of the “n”-word and a swastika written on a whiteboard, and four incidents involving taking down stickers of pro-Israel groups. In 2024, there was one incident of a swastika etched in a stall, and another incident of tiles arranged to look like a swastika. The UMPD report also shared data on calls they received about possible anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish incidents that, after investigations by patrol and/or detectives, were not found to meet the definitions of hate/bias cases (See Appendix 4).

PUTTING INCIDENTS IN WIDER CONTEXT: **Campus Belonging & Community Survey Findings**

Besides hearing directly from members and representatives of our University community, the JTF sought to learn more about the broader climate on campus, especially about the attitudes of those members who are Jewish and Muslim, in a comparative, methodical way, and with a larger sample than meetings and forums could provide. The university had already planned a major “Belonging and Community” survey² of the entire campus to gain insight into the university climate as seen by all of our community, students, faculty, and staff. The survey – which was fielded from April 3 to May 3, 2024 and netted 12,233 respondents (23% of the entire UMD community) – assessed the level of comfort of community members overall as well as in different university settings. It also included religious/spiritual³ self-identification, with 675 respondents identifying as Jewish and 418 identifying as Muslim. This enabled a degree of comparison across our sub-communities. Before the executive summary was published this fall, the relevant preliminary data was made available to us to analyze for this report.

It is important to note that during the period of the fielding of the survey, protests over the war in Gaza and Israel were already in full force nationally and internationally, including on American campuses. The level of civilian casualties both in Hamas’ attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, and the subsequent Israeli war in Gaza drew considerable outrage from large segments of society that went well beyond Arabs, Israelis, Jews, and Muslims. While protests on American campuses, including on our campus, have been overwhelmingly peaceful, there were high-profile cases of violence that generated fear and concern elsewhere.

Incidents of hate and prejudice against Jews and Muslims, including violent ones, have increased nationally in the past year. According to the FBI, from 2022 to 2023, there was a 55% increase in anti-Jewish hate crimes, a 51% increase in anti-Islamic hate crimes, and a 34% increase in anti-Arab hate crimes. A University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll conducted in February 2024 found that Americans report observing more incidents of prejudice against Jews and Muslims than against other groups, compared to five years ago. Some national polls indicated disturbing trends on American campuses and outside. A January University of Chicago study – based on a survey of 5,000 college students, representing over 600 academic institutions and an additional 5,000 American adults as a companion set – found that 56% of Jewish students and 52% of Muslim students nationally reported feeling threatened, compared to 19% of all students surveyed, when asked if they felt in personal danger “because of their support for either Israelis or Palestinians in the current war between Israel and Hamas.”

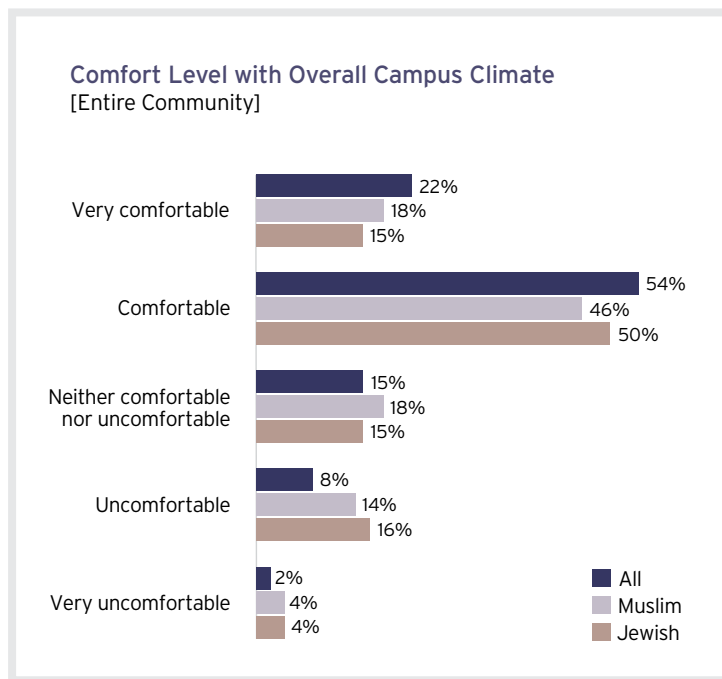
2 The Belonging and Community at UMD Survey was administered to University of Maryland students, faculty, and staff from April 3 to May 3, 2024. The survey was conducted by Rankin Climate and supported by a Climate Survey Working Group co-chaired by Stephanie H. Chang, assistant vice president for diversity and inclusion, and Dawn Culpepper, director of the ADVANCE program for inclusive excellence.

3 Note that not all Jewish and Muslim members of the university community necessarily identified themselves religiously.

This was the context during which the University of Maryland’s climate survey took place: an emotionally trying period for many members of our community, especially Arab, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian members. The devastating reality in the Middle East was highly polarizing on our campus, as it has been nationally. Given this context, the findings of the university’s survey were illuminating.

Overall Comfort Level

The key question asked in the survey was about the level of comfort members of the University community feel across different settings, with the options given: “very comfortable,” “comfortable,” “neither comfortable nor uncomfortable,” “uncomfortable,” and “very uncomfortable.” At some level, a degree of discomfort in a diverse and intellectually vibrant institution is not only expected but may even be desirable, as students often confront issues and ideas that challenge their pre-college paradigms. Staff and faculty may also experience new environments in a large highly diverse institution like our own campus. But differences across segments of the population could still tell a story, and those who express feeling “very uncomfortable” could be indicating something more problematic.

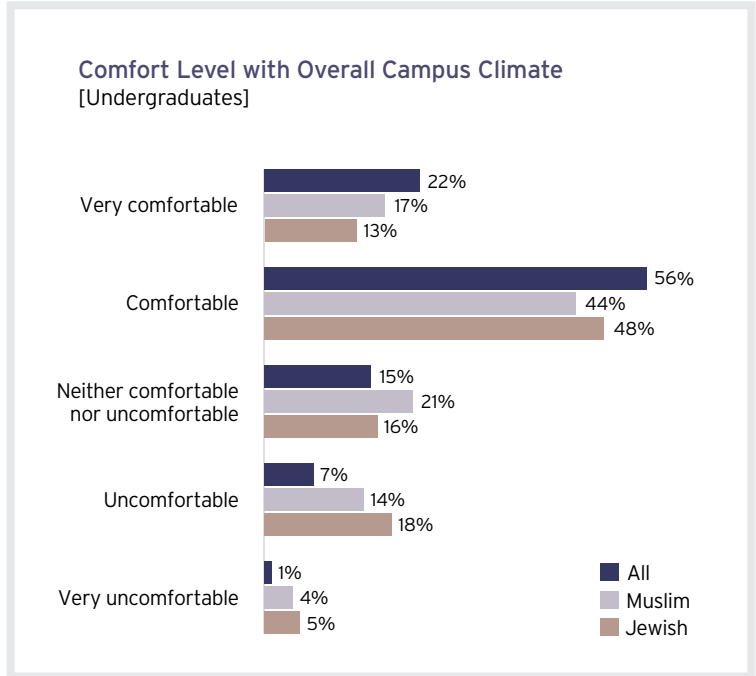


Findings

Overall, 65% and 64% of Jewish and Muslim Terps respectively said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall campus climate (including 15% of Jews and 18% of Muslims who said they were “very comfortable” on campus.) Comparatively, 76% of the overall campus population said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” on campus (with 22% saying they were “very comfortable”).

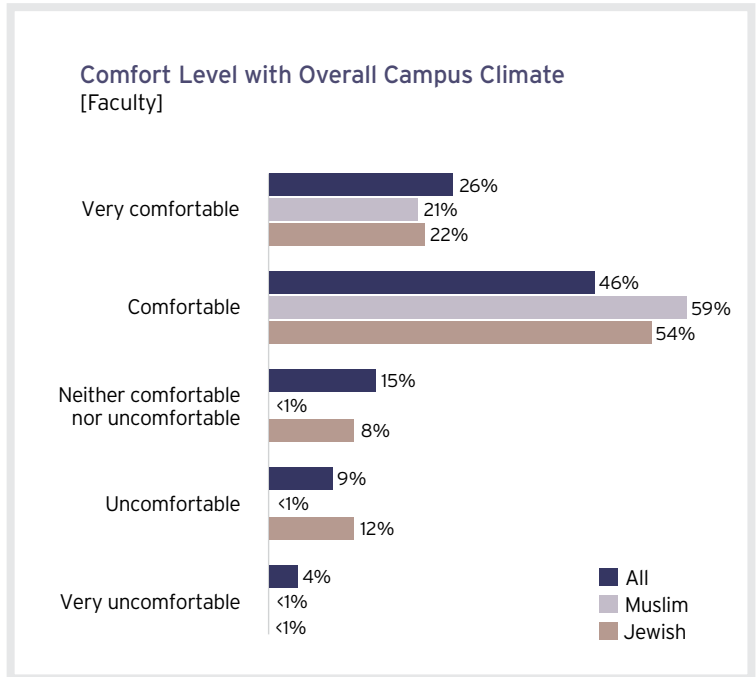
Comfort Level Among Undergraduate Students

51% of both Muslim and Jewish undergraduates said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall campus climate (including 17% of Muslims and 13% of Jews who described themselves as “very comfortable”), compared to 78% of the general undergraduate population that was “comfortable” or “very comfortable” on campus (including 22% who said they were “very comfortable”).



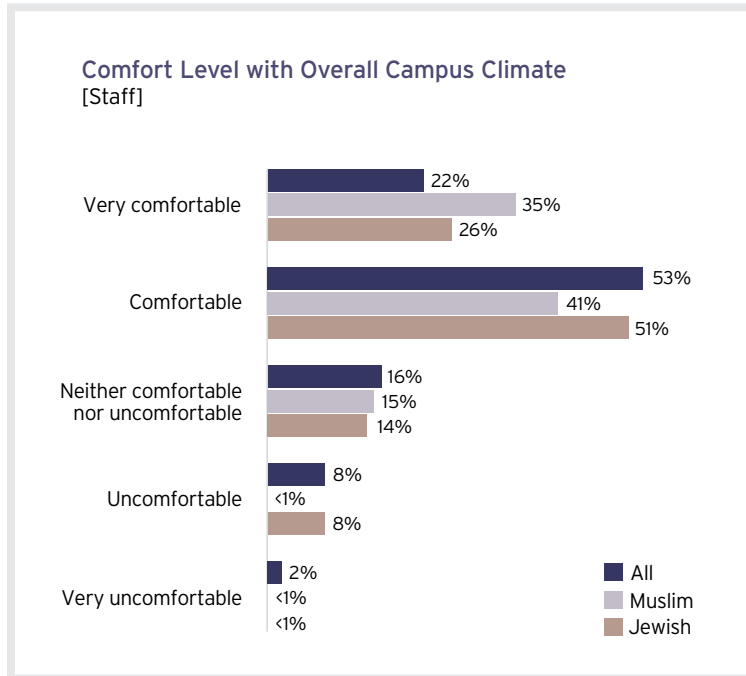
Comfort Level Among Faculty

76% of Jewish faculty and 81% of Muslim faculty said they felt “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with campus climate overall (including 22% and 21% respectively who said they were “very comfortable”). Overall, 72% of all faculty said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate on campus (including 26% who said they were “very comfortable”).



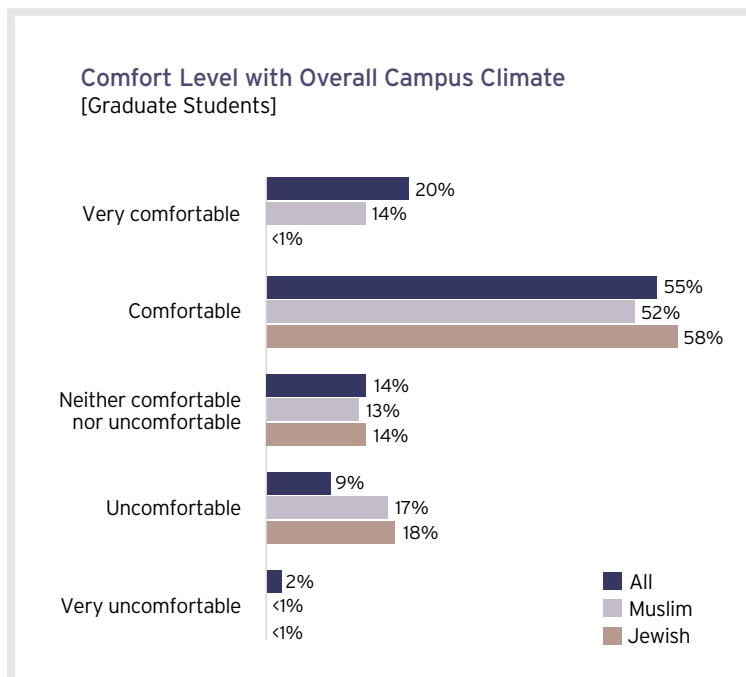
Comfort Level Among Staff

76% and 77% of Muslim and Jewish staff respectively described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate on campus (including 35% of Muslims and 26% of Jews who said they were “very comfortable”), compared to 75% of all staff (including 22% who said they were “very comfortable”).



Comfort Level Among Graduate Students

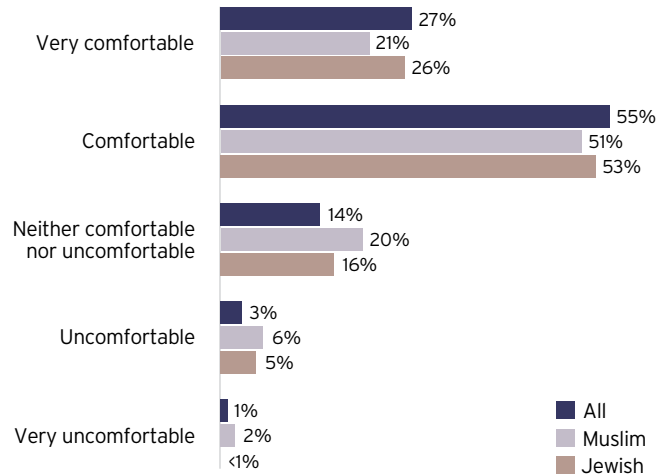
66% of Muslim and 58% of Jewish graduate students described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate on campus (including 14% of Muslim students and less than 1% of Jewish students who said they were “very comfortable”). Comparatively, 75% of all grad students said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” on campus (including 20% who said they were “very comfortable”).



Undergraduate Students' Comfort Level in Class

72% and 79% of Muslim and Jewish undergraduates, respectively, described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” in the classroom (including 21% of Muslims and 26% of Jews who said they were “very comfortable”), compared to 75% of all undergrads who said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” in class (including 27% who said they were “very comfortable”).

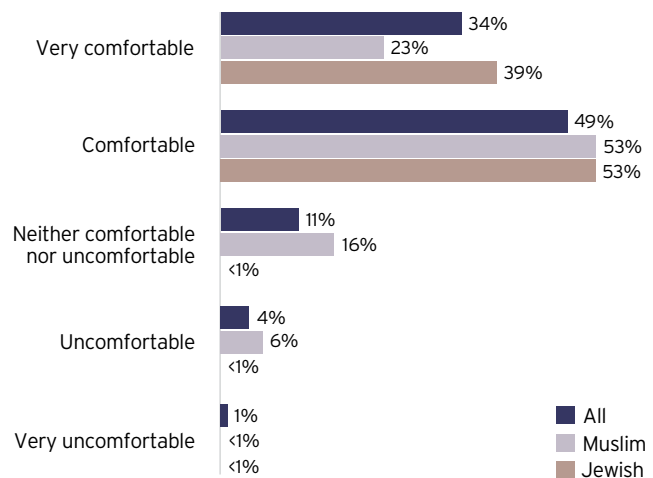
Comfort Level in the Classroom
 [Undergraduates]



Graduate Students' Comfort Level in Class

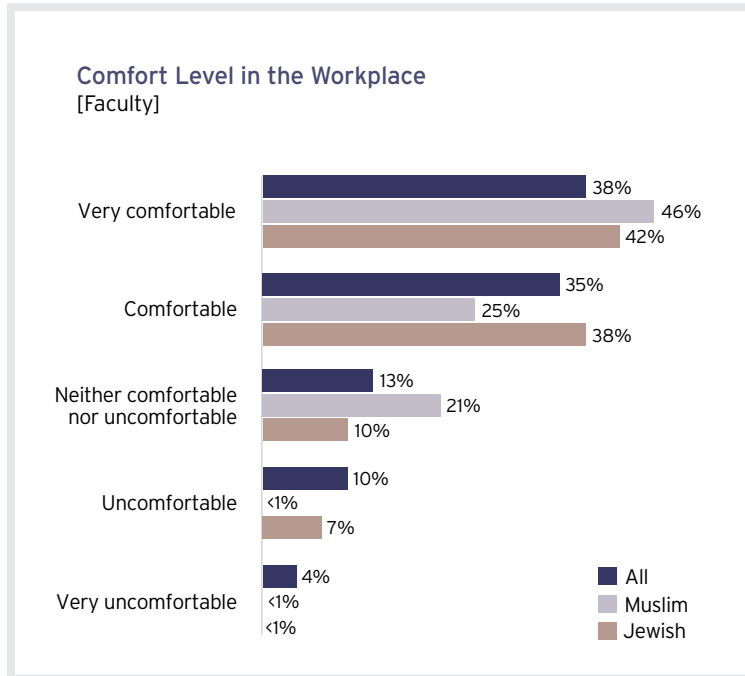
76% and 92% of Muslim and Jewish graduate students, respectively, described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” in the classroom (including 23% of Muslims and 39% of Jews, respectively, who said they were “very comfortable”), compared to 75% of all grad students who said they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” (including 34% who said they were “very comfortable”).

Comfort Level in the Classroom
 [Graduate Students]



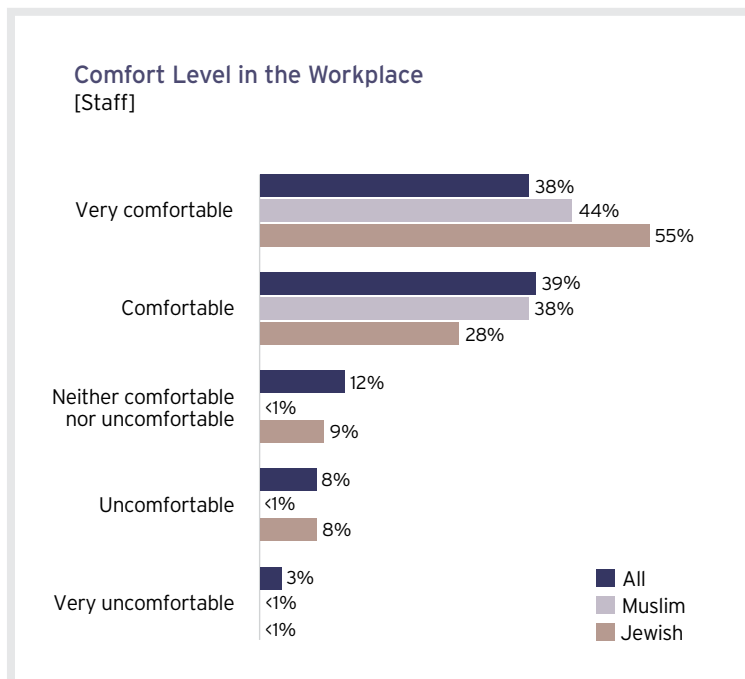
Faculty's Comfort Level in the Workplace

71% of Muslim faculty and 80% of Jewish faculty said that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” in their department, program or work unit, including 46% and 42% of Muslim and Jewish faculty who respectively described themselves as “very comfortable” with the climate in their workplace. Comparatively, 73% of all faculty described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” including 38% who described themselves as “very comfortable.”



Staff's Comfort Level in the Workplace

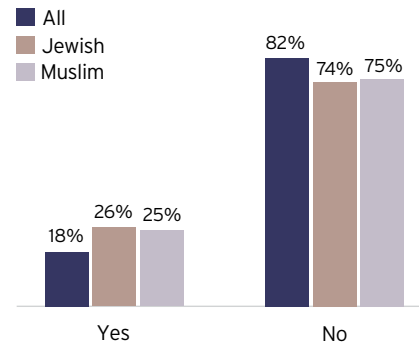
82% of Muslim staff and 83% of Jewish staff said that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” in their department, program or work unit, including 46% and 42% of Muslim and Jewish staff who respectively described themselves as “very comfortable” with the climate in their workplace. Comparatively, 77% of all staff described themselves as “comfortable” or “very comfortable” (including 38% who described themselves as “very comfortable”).



Overall Experiences of Negative Treatment

When asked whether they personally had experienced negative or unfair treatment in the past year, 26% of Jewish and 25% Muslim community members said that they had, compared to 18% of the general campus population.

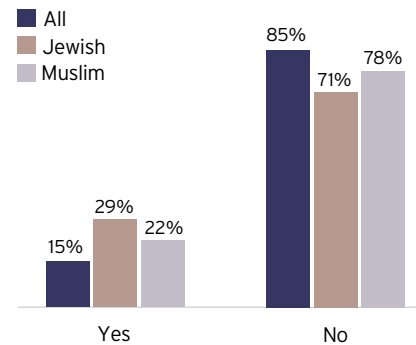
In the past year, have you personally experienced any negative or unfair treatment?
[Entire Community]



Undergraduates Students' Experiences of Negative Treatment

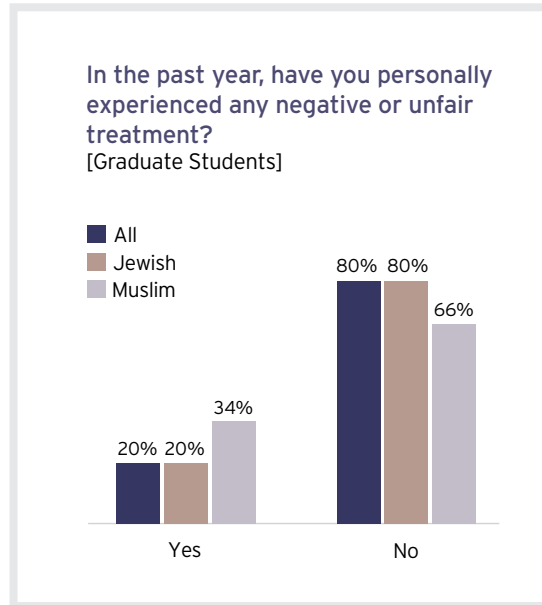
When asked whether they personally had experienced negative or unfair treatment in the past year, 29% of Jewish and 22% of Muslim undergraduates said that they had, compared to 15% of all undergraduate students.

In the past year, have you personally experienced any negative or unfair treatment?
[Undergraduates]



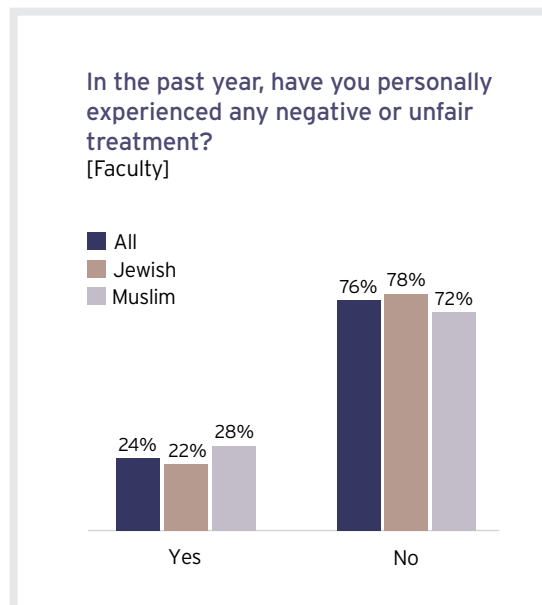
Graduate Students' Experiences of Negative Treatment

When asked whether they personally had experienced negative or unfair treatment in the past year, 20% of Jewish and 34% of Muslim graduate students said that they had, compared to 20% of all graduate students.



Faculty's Experiences of Negative Treatment

When asked whether they personally had experienced negative or unfair treatment in the past year, 22% of Jewish faculty and 28% of Muslim faculty said that they had, compared to 24% of all faculty.

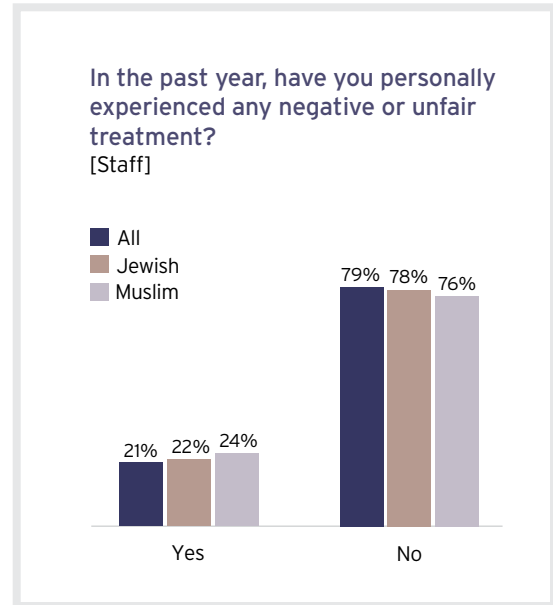


Staff's Experiences of Negative Treatment

When asked whether they personally had experienced negative or unfair treatment in the past year, 22% of Jewish and 24% of Muslim staff said that they had, compared to 21% of all staff.

Summary of Survey Findings

While nearly two-thirds of self-identified Jewish and Muslim members of the University community expressed feeling “comfortable” or “very comfortable” on campus overall, that figure represents a lower level of comfort than that of the overall University community, which stood at about three-quarters of the entire community. In addition, 4% of both Jewish and Muslim respondents expressed feeling “very uncomfortable” compared to 2% of the university community overall.



The University’s subcommunities also provided evidence for some differences: undergraduate Jewish and Muslim students tended to express more discomfort than did graduate students, staff, and faculty. Jewish and Muslim faculty tended to express comfort levels similar to those of faculty overall, with only small differences. And Jewish and Muslim staff members who said they were either “comfortable” or “very comfortable” were roughly equal to those who said the same among the overall staff respondents.

Notably, both undergraduate and graduate Jewish and Muslim students express much less discomfort in the classroom than on campus overall. Similarly, Jewish and Muslim faculty report lower levels of discomfort in their department, program or workplace than they do overall on campus, and also lower than University faculty overall. Jewish and Muslim staff members too feel more comfortable in their work environment than on campus overall, and also more comfortable than overall staff, with 55% of Jewish staff members and 44% of Muslim ones reporting being “very comfortable” in their work environment, compared to 38% of all staff. This is an important finding indicating that the disproportionate discomfort that some Jewish and Muslim members of our community feel does not originate in their immediate working and learning environments but rather in their experience or perception of other outside environments.

One area of particular note is the number of Jewish and Muslim community members who reported experiencing “negative or unfair treatment in the past year.” Although the source of the treatment is unclear from the question, these numbers are interesting: 29% of Jewish undergraduate students reported experiencing such treatment, compared to 22% of Muslim undergraduates and 15% overall; meanwhile, 34% of Muslim graduate students reported such treatment, compared to 20% of Jewish graduate students and 20% overall.

Existing University Rules, Programs, and Guidelines

Policies and Procedures Relevant to Antisemitism and Islamophobia

Policies and procedures around free expression and campus climate have been a topic of administrative concern since at least 2017. In light of national tensions around the 2016 election, and in direct response to the racist murder of Lt. Richard Collins III on UMD's campus in May 2017, then-University President Wallace Loh charged a Joint Task Force on Inclusion and Respect. The 2018 report of this task force specifically addressed the tensions around “how to balance free speech that is protected by state and federal laws with speech that is considered conduct that can be punished as a crime or as a violation of University policies” (“[Inclusion and Respect at the University of Maryland](#)” 4).

The current campus policies that are relevant to antisemitism and Islamophobia include not only those related to free speech and free expression but also policies around matters of safety and security and processes for addressing violation of both (See Appendix 2). Specific policies address student, faculty, and staff conduct; threatening and intimidating conduct by any member of the campus community, and the use of campus facilities and outdoor spaces. Specific attention to protest activity on campus in the past year has also led the University to update its policies on locations for expressive activity, including both events and sidewalk chalking.

Other policies address campus climate more generally. These include standards for non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity, as well as a [Statement on University Values](#) that arose out of the Task Force on Inclusion and Respect. It states, in part, that UMD aspires “to become a community that is: United, Respectful, Secure and Safe, Inclusive, Accountable, and Empowered and Open to Growth.”

The JTF identified two important resources for increasing understanding about free expression and its limits on campus. The Office of General Counsel (OGC) has created a [Freedom of Speech on Campus](#) website that provides extensive information on the First Amendment and UMD's policies and perspectives on free expression in light of it. The Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) provides a source focused on faculty and classroom expression in its *Academic Freedom and Free Speech* website. The OGC website also provides reporting resources and explicitly encourages members of the UMD community to report threatening or intimidating conduct, bias, discrimination, and/or harassment.

Safety and Security on Campus

In consultations with representatives of the University of Maryland Police Department (UMPD), the Department of Resident Life (ResLife), Bias Incident Support Services (BISS) of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI), the Adele H. Stamp Student Union (Stamp), and the University Counseling Center, members of the Joint Task Force received information on campus security structures and procedures,

protocols used during events and in response to antisemitic or Islamophobic incidents, and the processes associated with reporting and creating records of hate/bias incidents connected with the campus community.

Overall, respondents to JTF questions expressed satisfaction with the current system, which is committed to supporting free speech in the context of a consistently safe and secure campus atmosphere. The various units on campus consult with each other regularly and maintain open lines of communication, which facilitate collaborative responses when security issues arise.

Several challenges were brought to light in these meetings. Chief among these is the process associated with reporting hate/bias incidents, which would include antisemitic or Islamophobic events. Because such incidents might be reported to UMPD but can also be reported separately to BISS, ResLife, OCRSM, and/or Student Conduct, it can be difficult to create or obtain a clear picture of exactly how many incidents of what sort have occurred. In addition, although the BISS reporting system provides opportunities to indicate types of hate/bias incidents, those reporting can only choose one category (race or religion or sexuality, etc.), even as hate/bias incidents often involve more than one identity category.

Discussions with ODI and BISS revealed the opportunity for growth through greater attention to religious and ethnic diversity. Development and expansion of interfaith dialogue programs is one avenue forward in this area. Equally important would be efforts to establish affiliations with campus chaplains and religious/ethnic organizations, to promote direct outreach to and support for persons impacted by religious/ethnic bias. Creation of updated and expanded resource pages would be an added benefit of building this relationship.

Mental and emotional wellbeing are important aspects of building communities that are safe and secure. To that end, the University would benefit from focusing on the needs of Muslim and Jewish Students in the context of its support for [Cultural Centers](#), [Affinity Group Welcomes](#), and the [Counseling Center](#). The burden of care for Jewish, Muslim, and Arab students should not fall to non-UMD entities; rather students, faculty, and staff who are Muslim or Jewish must feel supported by UMD and a part of the UMD community.

Balancing Free Speech with Safety and a Culture of Understanding

The University of Maryland's commitment to free speech is essential to our academic community, but as the University statement and guidelines indicate, free speech must be balanced by strong and equal protections for the safety of all members of the campus community. Our findings indicate that the University has a strong set of rules, guidelines, and processes that have aided in assuring peace during a painful, stressful, and contentious period, especially given the size and diversity of our community, and the exceptional proportion of students who are either Jewish or Muslim. Still, as we suggest later, there is room for improvement.

Our suggestions begin with the reconfirmation of our core academic mission and our educational assets. As one expert on academic values and free speech put it to our JTF, "we are not punitive institutions; we are not investigative institutions. We are educational institutions. We educate and we counsel. You will never punish your way out of ignorance. We are dedicated to the prospect that you can educate your way out of ignorance, which is not the same as educating people out of their opinions."

Beyond the constitutional obligation to protect free speech and the established rules for campus safety, the University has significant latitude to advance a culture of diversity, toleration of difference, understanding, collegiality, and dialogue. We see this as an especially vital opportunity in light of our central educational mission and assets. We do not have to agree with each other to be sensitive to each other's fears and insecurities. Ideally, dialogue should be encouraged across the University community, with institutional encouragement, including among faculty. Dialogue, however, cannot be imposed. When it is not possible, such as in moments of deep personal loss and pain, it is crucial that each give space to the other, to grieve, to empathize with those they love, and to be who they are, however they define themselves. We believe that there are some important steps that the University can undertake – while emphasizing its educational mission – to advance these goals and to increase community sensitivity to the challenges that Muslim and Jewish community members face.

Recommendations

The University of Maryland has fortunately avoided an eruption of violence on campus or incidents that might have endangered the physical safety of its members during a tense year, even as a number of incidents have generated not only discomfort but also expressions of fear in segments of our community. Against hopes for a quick resolution, the ongoing Middle East conflict, the scale of the humanitarian disaster and destruction, and the threat of escalation to a regional war, in which the United States may indeed be a central player, ensure that tensions will not end anytime soon and may even increase. Our University will not be isolated from these national and global challenges, and we must remain vigilant with regard to campus climate in light of them.

Moving forward, we offer some recommendations to guide the University's efforts, based on what we have learned, especially regarding the advancement of a culture that values diversity and pluralism, seeks to advance mutual understanding, and leans heavily into its core educational mission to encourage avenues of dialogue across our campus. We remain guided by our lodestar of free speech for all, which includes the constitutionally protected right to peaceful protests, in a context that protects and values the safety of all members of our community equally.

Overall, we have been impressed with the standards and structures that determine campus safety, security, climate, and communication. In the recommendations that follow, we provide suggestions for enhancing their efficacy, while creating new opportunities for education, community-building, and ongoing protections of free speech and assembly. We see these recommendations as resources for the future, to create a more welcoming atmosphere for diversity and disagreement on campus, both in these times of heightened tensions and in better times, we might hope, in their eventual resolution.

Toward Advancing a Culture of Understanding

FIRST, the University should pursue and implement **an institutional structure for training the campus community about antisemitism and Islamophobia**. Such a structure is warranted by the large size of our Jewish and Muslim communities on campus, as well as by the rising number of national incidents of prejudice against both. The particular history and experiences of Arabs, Israelis, Jews, and Muslims, not only in the past decades but in a larger cultural, religious, and historical perspective, reveals as much about the diversity of our campus and our country as it does about these particular traditions and communities. At minimum, specific modules on Islamophobia and antisemitism, prepared by campus experts on the subjects, should be introduced into TerrapinSTRONG, the hallmark orientation to our campus for all its members.

SECOND, the University should pursue and implement **an institutional structure for specific education and training programs around Islamophobia and antisemitism that address the nuances of issues appropriate to particular unit responsibilities** (e.g., information sessions for academic advisors, the University Health Center, Department of Residential Life, the Office of Diversity

and Inclusion, Accessibility and Disability Service, and Dining Services administrators, among others). Relevant updates should also be included in existing and new orientation sessions, such as the annual New Faculty Orientation; new employee orientations; resident assistant and staff training; Training for Counseling Center staff; and University Health Center/behavioral health services training. Creation of the content of these trainings, again, should include the active contributions of campus experts on the relevant subjects.

THIRD, as an institution that prioritizes critical thinking, the University should seriously consider a **curricular requirement related to dialogue and understanding in environments of tension, difference, and conflict**. A possible avenue for implementation of this recommendation might be found in the newly developed Navigating Diverse Social Environments general education requirement for UMD undergraduates, or it might be fulfilled in other ways. At minimum, this one-credit course will include discussion of handling difficult conversations, mastering the principles of effective dialogue, and learning conflict-resolution skills. It might also provide training on free speech, academic freedom, democracy, religious differences, and Islamophobia/antisemitism, especially regarding student-to-student conduct. The University should provide funding for assessment and implementation of this recommendation.

FOURTH, the University should commit to an **increased engagement with the topics of prejudice against Muslims and Jews in educational and dialogic programming specifically related to campus diversity**. This programming can take place on campus at many levels and in many contexts, and these topics should be addressed, at minimum, in the programming of academic and administrative units, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Division of Student Affairs, Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy, the University Counseling Center, and the University Health Center among others across the campus. Diversity and inclusion programming may include events specifically addressing antisemitism or Islamophobia in isolation, both together, or in any other relevant combination. Specific attention should be paid to the intersections of experiences of religion, ethnicity, race, and national origin as they relate to other markers of diversity on campus, with subject area experts contributing to the content of this programming.

FIFTH, the University should take advantage of existing cultural programming and provide incentives to encourage creation of new **cultural programming that explores a rich understanding of diversities of religion, race, and ethnicity**. Ideally, incentives will support both campus-wide, intentional events and projects related to antisemitism and Islamophobia, as well as unit-specific programming. Examples of such programming might include conferences, film series, interdepartmental events, reading groups, and First Year Book selections, as well as programming created by and directed specifically toward student groups and organizations on campus.

Administrative Recommendations

SIXTH, the University administration must prioritize the vision and focus of the University itself and, especially in times of public crisis, resist asserting positions on socially and politically contentious issues. In times of crisis, University administrators come under enormous pressure to assert institutional positions on issues that may not be within their areas of expertise and over which their constituents may be divided.

University of Maryland administrators must resist such pressures, recognizing that times of crisis are exactly when scholars in institutions of higher learning are specifically called upon to engage in description, analysis, and thoughtful debate, unencumbered by institutional positions. Moreover, taking a position in one instance would inevitably increase pressure for staking out positions in other instances. Exceptions to this norm include occasions when the University is legally obligated to take a stance or in cases when an issue concerns core University functions. In support of this practice, the University should develop and announce **a policy that resists asserting University positions on divisive public issues, especially in times of crisis.**

SEVENTH, in times of crisis, the University administration must assess, engage with, and focus **attention on the needs of the on-campus community** – staff, students, faculty, and other community members – prioritizing their safety, well-being, and concerns, rather than focus on the pressure of outside forces or events on other campuses. To be sure, the University is not an island, and it is inevitably impacted by local, national, and international conversations. But the first priority in times of crisis must be the immediate and long-term needs and fears of the UMD community, rather than claims or critiques emanating from outside sources.

EIGHTH, the administration of a university the size of UMD is necessarily complex and multi-layered, and responsibilities for various facets of university life are spread widely across a variety of units on campus. Campus community members should have **ready access to the policies that affect them in times of tension**, including policies that address the nuances of free speech and assembly, student rights and responsibilities, and rules for visitors on campus. The University should assess its communications on these and other relevant issues as they relate to the classroom, residence halls, and the campus more generally, assuring that clear and coherent information is available when needed. Support for this process may come from centralization of university guidelines and resources or the creation of new points of access around specific themes, questions, or needs. The University should also make a specific effort to bring this information to the attention of the campus community.

NINTH, safety and security are central issues on any academic campus, but they are particular points of concern in times of tension. The University must ensure dynamics of open communication on campus around issues of safety and security, keeping the campus community aware of events and official responses as they arise. Such communication requires having relationships with a wide diversity of groups and organizations on campus. The University should assess and continue to build its relationships with local communities, including key Arab, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian constituencies, to build **support structures to maintain relationships and prevent escalations in difficult times**. We would note that not all community members are reached by a single set of relationships. Administrative support needs to include the campus population in its broadest diversity, recognizing (for example) the need to maintain connections with communities that are built around religious affiliation, but also race, ethnicity, political identification, or academic commitments. The safety and well-being of the campus as a whole requires making connections across these lines of commitment and difference. The University should explore ways to enhance campus security for all members, while being sensitive to those who may feel alarmed by heavy security presence.

TENTH, the University boasts remarkable resources to support the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. In light of the compounding tensions of the past year, in which some campus community members have felt unprecedented distress about events both at home and away, the University must ensure that all campus community members know about the **mental health resources and support** available to them and must provide additional support if it becomes necessary. The University should leverage what it has learned from the recently released mental health report to actively reach out to affected students, staff, and faculty and potentially to cultivate new resources to provide additional support as needed.

APPENDIX 1

Joint Presidential-Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia

JANUARY 29, 2024

Charge

Background:

The recent events in the Middle East has unfortunately resulted on some university campuses in the United States, a rise in the number of hate incidents against particular religious, nationalities and cultural groups. Recognizing the importance of fostering an environment of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, and combating discrimination of all forms, the University of Maryland hereby establishes a *Joint Presidential-Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia*. This Joint Task Force will be charged with critically examining current policies, practices, safety and security measures, and campus culture to identify areas for improvement and recommend actionable strategies to address and prevent future incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia, and for that matter all forms of hate on campus.

Purpose:

The primary purpose of the Task Force is to create a campus community that is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. The Task Force will work to understand the root causes of antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents, as well as other forms of hate, assess the effectiveness of existing preventive measures, and propose new initiatives to foster interfaith and cultural understanding, dialogue, and safety and support.

Scope of Work:

The Joint Presidential-Senate Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia shall:

1. **Conduct a comprehensive review:** Examine existing university policies, procedures, and resources related to antisemitism and Islamophobia. Evaluate their effectiveness in preventing and addressing such incidents.
2. **Engage with the campus community:** Seek input from students, faculty, staff, and relevant stakeholders to understand their experiences, concerns, and suggestions regarding antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents on campus.
3. **Assess campus climate:** Analyze the current campus climate with a focus on identifying factors that contribute to or mitigate antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents. Consider external influences and prevailing societal attitudes that may impact the university community.
4. **Assess campus safety and security methods:** Analyze current campus safety and security methods with a desire to ensure that members from certain religious, and cultural backgrounds feel safe in and around our campus.

5. **Recommendations:** Develop a set of actionable recommendations based on the findings of the comprehensive review and community engagement. Prioritize short-term and long-term strategies that address prevention, education, reporting mechanisms, and support services. Identify relevant university offices and stakeholders to oversee the implementation of recommended strategies.

Task Force Composition

The Task Force shall be composed of diverse representatives from the university community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators. It is essential that members bring a range of perspectives, including those from different religious and cultural backgrounds, to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing antisemitism and Islamophobia on campus.

Co-Chair: Maxine Grossman, Director and Associate Professor, Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Program and Center for Jewish Studies

Co-Chair: Shibley Telhami, Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development; Professor, Government & Politics

Task Force Members:

The full membership of the task force consists of diverse representatives from the university community, including students, faculty, staff and administrators, who bring a range of perspectives, including those from different religious, cultural and other backgrounds, to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing antisemitism and Islamophobia on campus.

James Bond, *Director, Office of Student Conduct*

***Kemi Abdurasaq Busari**, *Doctoral student, Philip Merrill College of Journalism*

Stephanie Chang, *Assistant Vice President, Office of Diversity and Inclusion*

Emily Devore, *Undergraduate student, School of Public Policy*

Jen Gartner, *Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel*

Adam Ghannoum, *Undergraduate student, College of Information Studies and Robert H. Smith School of Business; President, Muslim Student Association*

Hassan Ibrahim, *Clinical Professor, Robert H. Smith School of Business*

Reni Kaza, *Undergraduate student, College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences*

Sahar Mohammed Khamis, *Associate Professor, College of Arts and Humanities*

Arie Kruglanski, *Distinguished University Professor, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*

Major Michael Leadbeter, *Commander of Support Services Bureau, Department of Public Safety*

Doron Levy, *Professor and Chair, College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences*

Yelena Luckert, *Director of Research, Teaching and Learning, University Libraries*

Keira Martone, *Associate Director, Department of Resident Life*

James McShay, *Assistant Vice President for Engagement, Division of Student Affairs*

Ayala Nuriely-Kimel, *Lecturer, College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences*

Korey Rothman, *Senior Lecturer and Director of Civic Engagement for Social Good, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*

Daniel Satterthwaite, *Doctoral student, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*

Stone Schwartz, *Undergraduate student, A. James Clark School of Engineering; President, Jewish Student Union*
Yasmeen Farooqi Shah, *Professor, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*
Imaan Shikoh, *Undergraduate student, School of Public Policy*
***Saúl Sosnowski**, *Professor, College of Arts and Humanities*
Peter Wien, *Professor, College of Arts and Humanities*
Zeena Zakharia, *Assistant Professor, College of Education*

*Withdrew from the Task Force.

**Withdrew from the Task Force; replaced by UMD president with Ernesto Calvo, *Professor, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*

Timeline:

The Task Force shall complete its work within six months and no later than June 30, 2024, providing regular updates and a final report to the university administration.

Reporting:

The Task Force shall submit regular progress reports to [relevant university body], with a final comprehensive report outlining its findings, recommendations, and proposed action plan.

This charge is effective as of January 29, 2024, and the Task Force is encouraged to begin its work promptly.

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary Definitions:

Anti-Semitism: hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group.

Islamophobia: irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against Islam or people who practice Islam

APPENDIX 2

University of Maryland Campus-Level Policies and Procedures Relevant to Antisemitism and Islamophobia

1. What kind of policies exist to materially or physically protect campus community?

Altogether, UMD has at least 18 policies, procedures, and guidance items directed towards protecting the physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being of members of the campus community.

UMD has numerous policies and procedures that protect the physical aspects of the campus community, including prohibitions on causing physical harm to individuals and prohibitions on causing property damage, including those set forth below.

[USM's V-8.o, Policy on Event-Related Student Misconduct](#), which is incorporated into UMD's V-1.00(B), *Code of Student Conduct*, addresses rioting, assault, theft, vandalism, fire-setting, or other misconduct that results in harm to persons or property.

[USM's VI-1.00, Policy on Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity](#) and UMD's VI-1.00(A), *Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action Statement of Policy* prohibit acts of violence and other harassment on the basis of any legally-protected characteristic (including religion and nationality).

[UMD's VI-1.00\(B\), Non-Discrimination Policies and Procedures](#), similarly prohibits any conduct (verbal, physical, written, graphic, or electronic) that threatens an individual or group.

[UMD's VI-1.00\(F\), Policy on Threatening and Intimidating Conduct](#), addresses expressions of intent to cause physical violence, damage property, or otherwise act in ways that endanger an individual's health and safety.

[USM's VI-4.10, Policy on the Use of the Physical Facilities of the University System of Maryland for Public Meetings](#), and [UMD's VI-4.10\(A\), Policy and Procedures for the Use of Facilities and Outdoor Spaces](#), address the appropriate use of physical facilities and require proper safeguards. UMD's policy notes that threats of physical violence are not protected by the First Amendment.

[UMD's VI-11.00\(A\), Faculty and Staff Workplace Violence Reporting and Risk Assessment Procedures](#), addresses physical violence, verbal threats, and menacing behavior.

[UMD's Guidelines on Demonstrations and Leafletting](#) prohibit physically abusive, harassing, threatening, or intimidating conduct.

[UMD's Statement on University Values](#) notes that UMD aspires "to become a community that is: United, Respectful, Secure and Safe, Inclusive, Accountable, and Empowered and Open to

Growth.” It asks the UMD community to refrain from violence and aggression, as well as slander, intimidation, and the “symbolic intimation of violence.”

2. What policies exist to protect the emotional safety or welfare of campus community?

The policies noted above in #1 also address non-physical safety, such as offensive, belittling, or denigrating conduct. UMD also has [VI-1.00\(C\), Policy on Inclusive Communication](#), designed to create a welcoming environment that is free from subtle and overt bias and discrimination. Numerous policies address the need to treat other individuals with respect and dignity.

3. Do existing policies account for matters of perception vs immediately actionable violations?

Yes, although people may not fully understand First Amendment protections that allow for speech that causes discomfort to the listener. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) prohibits intentionally causing physical harm *or creating a reasonable expectation of physical harm*. [USM’s VII-8.05, Policy on Professional Conduct and Workplace Bullying](#) (which applies to staff employees) prohibits staff from engaging in behavior that “*a reasonable employee would find malicious, degrading, intimidating, or threatening*.” In August 2024, the University adopted a new Policy on Faculty Professional Conduct (II-10.00[A]), which intended to cover similar ground for faculty as VII-8.05 covers for staff.

4. Which policies or guidelines address hate speech and the nuance between uncomfortable/difficult speech and hate speech?

The Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) has an [Academic Freedom and Free Speech](#) website, which notes that academic freedom is broad in scope but generally includes freedom of research and publication; freedom of teaching; freedom of internal criticism; and freedom to participate in public debate. It also notes that with freedom comes responsibility, including that:

- Faculty should not subject students, as a general matter, to discussion in the classroom that is not educationally relevant to the subject matter of what is being taught.
- Faculty should demonstrate respect for others as individuals, and show respect for the rights of others to express their views.
- Faculty should feel free to discuss subjects within their academic competencies, exercise intellectual honesty, and present opinions justified by the facts and standards of scholarship.
- Faculty should exercise caution not to speak on subjects not within their area(s) of expertise.

The OFA website also describes the [First Amendment rights](#) of faculty members.

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) has a [Freedom of Speech on Campus](#) website that addresses the First Amendment, UMD’s values, and the observation that it is “not the proper role of UMD to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive.” That said, it also notes that UMD “unequivocally condemns speech that supports prejudice and discrimination” and notes that UMD’s “condemnation of hate” does not violate the First Amendment.

Addressed on the OGC Freedom of Speech website are explanations of:

- Hate speech;
- Unprotected speech (i.e., speech not protected by the First Amendment);
- Time, place, and manner restrictions that UMD may impose on speech;
- An explanation that UMD is not a “traditional public forum” and is thus able to designate where expressive activities can and cannot occur;
- Academic freedom and employee free speech;
- Free speech and assembly rights for student organizations;
- The appropriate manner in which to criticize speech, which does not include silencing the speech of others;
- Civility and respect, noting that just because there is a First Amendment right to say something, that does not mean it should be said; and
- Doxing.

The OGC website also provides reporting resources and explicitly encourages members of the UMD community to report threatening or intimidating conduct, bias, discrimination, and/or harassment.

APPENDIX 3

University of Maryland Campus-Level Resources for Safety and Security on Campus

1. What structures are in place to respond to safety and security issues on campus?

Safety and security on campus are the purview of the [University of Maryland Police Department](#) (UMPD), working in collaboration with the [Department of Resident Life](#) (ResLife), the [Adele H. Stamp Center for Campus Life](#) (Stamp), and other administrative units at the University.

The UMPD campus security system includes an information analysis unit with three full-time staff members, who track and monitor safety information. Approximately 500 security cameras on campus are monitored by student staff. UMPD is also responsible for event security. At major campus events, UMPD officers are commissioned, and cameras are zoomed in on the event premises. Standard security procedures at major events, including athletic events, include ID checks, bag checks and metal-detector wandering.

The Stamp Student Union oversees more than 800 student groups, most of which are identity-based, and works with [thirteen chaplains](#) to meet the spiritual needs of UMD students. Additionally, Stamp oversees the faith-based and interfaith space at the [University of Maryland Memorial Chapel](#). Since 2022, Stamp has provided support through a “free expression response team” at campus events. These Stamp-trained faculty and staff members, who currently number about 65 to 70, wear brightly-colored lanyards identifying themselves as support resources and are present at the frontline of monitoring major campus events.

ResLife works closely with UMPD to manage safety and security in campus residences. ResLife maintains onsite staff in campus residences on a 24-hour, 7-day basis.

[The Office of Student Conduct](#) (Student Conduct) investigates both academic and non-academic violations of student conduct. In addition to individual incidents, Student Conduct also investigates allegations of [hazing](#).

The [Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct](#) (OCRSM), sometimes referred to as the Title IX Office, addresses cases of discrimination and harassment related to members of the campus community, including but not limited to sexual harassment and assault and discrimination based on protected classes such as race, color, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion.

2. What structures are in place to prevent or respond to incidents of Islamophobia or antisemitism on campus?

UMPD follows a community policing approach to campus life and has ongoing connections with campus faith leaders, working closely with them to support students. UMPD patrols and monitors multiple campus

locations and places of worship, gathering, and residency including the Nyumburu Cultural Center on Fridays for Muslim congregational prayer and UMD Hillel and Chabad on Saturdays for Jewish Sabbath observances.

The [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#) (ODI) provides resources for formal and informal diversity education, including training, consultations, and teaching materials. Their current training series includes a [Jewish Identities and Antisemitism Programming Series](#), and programming on Islamophobia is currently in the works.

ODI also provides support for people who have experienced a hate/bias incident. ODI's [Bias Incident Support Services](#) (BISS) collects reports on hate/bias incidents, which are shared on a campus [Bias Reporting Dashboard](#). BISS works one-on-one with individuals, providing referrals for personal support and facilitating reports to UMPD, the Office of Student Conduct, and the Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct, as relevant. BISS also sponsors hate/bias prevention programs and trainings.

The University has an [established policy](#) for responding to potential hate/bias incidents, including incidents that may reflect antisemitic or Islamophobic behavior. All reports of hate/bias incidents received by the UMPD are investigated. Those that rise to the level of criminal misconduct are handled according to UMPD policy. Those that do not may be referred to other campus entities (including the Office of Student Conduct, University Human Resources, and other relevant offices). Not all Hate Bias Incidents are reported to the UMPD, although they may be reported elsewhere, including to BISS.

ResLife oversees the protocol for suspected hate/bias incidents that happen in or around residence halls. Under this protocol, staff are expected to respond to the scene, secure the area, cover the area if there is any writing or other vandalism, and contact UMPD. ResLife staff are then expected to remain on the scene to provide support and resources. Impacted students are provided information and resources from ResLife, BISS, OCRSM, and the [UMD Counseling Center](#), and if it is deemed necessary, a temporary space is offered to impacted students. Additional follow-up is made on the next business day.

In residence hall cases where staff perceive a need for additional support, other responses may include floor or unit meetings, walking students to the Counseling Center to set appointments, referrals to other administrative offices, and helping students connect with affinity spaces and restorative circles.

The Counseling Center is the primary campus provider for psychological consultation services. While the center offers support for [student diversity](#) through walk-in hours for students of color, they offer no specific resources to meet unique needs of Muslim or Jewish students.

APPENDIX 4



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Public Safety Headquarters
College Park, Maryland 20742-6011
301.405.5726 TEL 301.314.9549 FAX
www.umdps.umd.edu

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Internationally Accredited

Major Michael Leadbeter
Commander, Support Services Bureau

MEMO

To: Dr. Shibley Telhami, Dr. Maxine Grossman
From: Major M. Leadbeter, UMPD
Date: October 28, 2024
Subject: Joint Task Force on Antisemitism and Islamophobia

The University of Maryland Police Department has actively participated in all scheduled free-expression and other related events on campus since October 7, 2023, specifically nine pro-Israel and (12) pro-Palestine events. The majority of the pro-Israel and pro-Palestine events were held on McKeldin Mall or Hornbake Plaza. The event spaces were reserved through the Stamp Student Union and required participating individuals and organizations to abide by prescribed rules. UMD's Free Expression Team, a campus wide team led by Stamp Student Union, participated in the management of these events. Members are typically the first to respond to (minor) incidents outside of the scope of, or in violation of the permit or contract.

To date, both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine organizations have remained generally compliant with agreed upon guidelines relating to time, space, sound, as well as other conduct-related requirements for scheduled events on campus. Absent any intervention by the Free Expression Team, UMPD has not referred any individuals or organizations to the UMD Office of Student Conduct or witnessed any criminal violations requiring enforcement at these free-expression events. Frequently, individuals with opposing views have expressed themselves at scheduled events, with none rising to the level of criminal violations or requiring remarkable actions by UMPD.

The following tables include calls and reports to UMPD only from January 2022 - August 2024. They do not include any reports to PGPD or other UMD offices.

This table includes hate/bias reports or reports with hate/bias indicators as determined by the State of Maryland and reported to the state by UMPD Records Manager.

Year	Bias Type	Type	Details
2022	anti-Jewish	Hate/Bias Incident	bulletin board swastika
2022	anti-Jewish	Hate/Bias Incident	"no Jews" written on restaurant sign
2023	anti-Jewish	Hate/Bias Incident	"n" word and swastika on white board
2023	anti-Jewish	Theft	stickers from pro-Israel group taken down
2023	anti-Jewish	Theft	stickers from pro-Israel group taken down
2023	anti-Jewish	Theft	stickers from pro-Israel group taken down
2023	anti-Jewish	Theft	stickers from pro-Israel group taken down
2024	anti-Jewish	Vandalism	swastika etched in stall
2024	anti-Jewish	Hate/Bias Incident	tiles arranged to look like swastika

This table includes calls for service when the initial call came in with a possible bias of some kind. After investigations by patrol and/or detectives, they did not meet the definitions of hate/bias cases.

A large variety of search terms were used in attempts to capture all relevant calls for service that fit the request. Additionally, several sources of records were cross checked. There was 1 anti-Muslim call that came in, but after investigation was unfounded.

Year	Type of call	Number
2023	Free Palestine on whiteboard	4
2023	Free Palestine on public space (outside)	3
2023	Chalking on ground	2
2023	Stickers	1
2024	Free Palestine on public space (inside)	4
2024	Flyers	1
2024	Verbal	1
2024	anti-Israel in stairwell	1
2024	Israeli flag removed from display	1

