

From: OCR
To: OCRCleveland@ed.gov
Cc: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)
Subject: FW: Title VI Complaint Against Youngstown State University, 1 Tressel Way, Youngstown, OH 44555 (National Origin – Jewish)
Date: Friday, February 16, 2024 11:59:06 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good morning OCR Cleveland,
We are forwarding the complaint below to you for review and appropriate handling.

Thank you,
OPEN Center Customer Service Team
Office for Civil Rights

From: Zachary Marschall (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 9:55 AM
To: OCR <OCR@ed.gov>
Subject: Title VI Complaint Against Youngstown State University, 1 Tressel Way, Youngstown, OH 44555 (National Origin – Jewish)

You don't often get email from (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) [Learn why this is important](#)

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Submitted via email
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202
Email: OCR@ed.gov

February 16, 2024

Re: Title VI Complaint Against Youngstown State University, 1 Tressel Way, Youngstown, OH 44555 (National Origin – Jewish)

Dear Assistant Secretary Catherine Lhamon,

I am writing as a journalist deeply concerned about antisemitism at this university since October 7, 2023.

The October 7 attack on Israel by Hamas terrorists killed more than 1,200 innocent people including at least 30 Americans. ^[1] This was the deadliest Palestinian terror attack on Israel in history and the single deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. ^[2]

Mere days after the Hamas attack, students at Youngstown State University in Ohio launched their own chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine. In an October 11 Instagram post, the newly formed organization declared, “We are a group committed to upholding the human rights and liberation of the Palestinians impacted by the illegal occupation of Palestine.”^[3]

The term “occupation” is employed in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to advance the argument that Israel bears ultimate responsibility for the welfare of the Palestinians, while limiting or denying Israel’s right to defend itself against Palestinian terror, and relieving the Palestinian side of responsibility for its own actions and their consequences. The term is also employed as part of a general assault upon Israel’s legitimacy, in the context of a geopolitical narrative that has little to do with Israel’s status under international law.^[4]

It is also disturbing that it was only *after* the depraved attacks by Hamas, including the rape and murder of civilians, women, and children, and with hundreds of innocents kidnapped, that these students considered forming an organization to support the Palestinians.

On (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) at Youngstown State University (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) She repeatedly declined to (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) Instead, (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

At this writing, Hamas currently has more than 100 innocent Israeli citizens held hostage in Gaza.^[7] At least 32 of these hostages are confirmed to be dead.^[8]

Almost 75% of Jewish college students have experienced or witnessed antisemitism since this school year began.^[9]

Members of Congress are currently discussing additional protections from the Department of Education for Jewish college students amid the current wave of antisemitic incidents.^[10] but no such discussions appear to be occurring at Youngstown State despite very clear threats.

Therefore, I ask the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights to conduct an immediate investigation against Youngstown.

For the record, I do give OCR my consent to disclose my name nor other personal information contained in this Title VI complaint to others for OCR’s investigation of, and enforcement activities related to, the complaint. I understand that OCR may have to close my complaint. I am not interested in participating in early mediation. I do not have an attorney representing me in this matter. I have not complained about these allegations to the

University.

Sincerely,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

Zachary Marschall

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

[1] <https://www.foxnews.com/live-news/october-24-israel-amas-war>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/12/israel-amas-war-biden-jews-holocaust-palestine-iran-warning>

³ <https://www.campusreform.org/article/youngstown-sjp-was-launched-after-the-amas-attacks-on-israel-here-is-its-leadership-team/24368>

⁴ <https://jcpa.org/article/why-is-israels-presence-in-the-territories-still-called-occupation/>

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/20/world/middleeast/israel-amas-hostages-update.html>

⁸ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/at-least-32-of-the-136-hostages-held-in-gaza-killed-20-others-feared-dead-nyt/>

⁹ <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/nearly-three-quarters-jewish-students-experienced-or-witnessed-antisemitism>

[1] ⁰ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/house/israel-war-day-resistance-college-protection-jewish-students>

Zachary Marschall

Editor in Chief

Campus Reform

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

[1] <https://www.foxnews.com/live-news/october-24-israel-amas-war>

[2] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/12/israel-amas-war-biden-jews-holocaust-palestine-iran-warning>

- [3] <https://www.campusreform.org/article/youngstown-sjp-was-launched-after-the-hamas-attacks-on-israel-here-is-its-leadership-team/24368>
- [4] <https://jcpa.org/article/why-is-israels-presence-in-the-territories-still-called-occupation/>
- [5] <https://www.campusreform.org/article/watch-why-should-i-condemn-anything-students-for-justice-in-palestine-president-refuses-to-condemn-hamas/24217>
- [6] <https://www.campusreform.org/article/watch-conservative-student-journalist-explains-how-he-got-pro-hamas-student-to-talk-to-him/24284>
- [7] <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/20/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-hostages-update.html>
- [8] <https://www.timesofisrael.com/at-least-32-of-the-136-hostages-held-in-gaza-killed-20-others-feared-dead-nyt/>
- [9] <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/nearly-three-quarters-jewish-students-experienced-or-witnessed-antisemitism>
- [10] <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/house/israel-war-day-resistance-college-protection-jewish-students>



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

1350 EUCLID AVENUE, SUITE 325
CLEVELAND, OH 44115-1812

REGION XV
MICHIGAN
OHIO

April 9, 2024

Via e-mail only to: president@ysu.edu

Bill Johnson
President
Youngstown State University
1 Tressel Way
Youngstown, Ohio 44555

Re: OCR Docket Number 15-24-2111

Dear President Johnson:

On February 16, 2024, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), received a complaint against the Youngstown State University (the University). The Complainant alleges that the University failed to respond to incidents of harassment of students on the basis of their national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) in October 2023.

OCR enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 100, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including shared ancestry, by recipients of federal financial assistance. As a recipient of federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, the University is subject to Title VI.

OCR is opening the following issue for investigation:

Whether the University failed to respond to alleged harassment of students based on national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) in a manner consistent with the requirements of Title VI.

Please understand that opening an investigation does not mean that OCR has made a decision about the complaint. During the investigation, OCR is neutral; OCR will collect and analyze the evidence it needs in order to make a decision about the complaint. OCR will ensure that its investigation is legally sufficient and addresses the allegation, in accordance with OCR's *Case Processing Manual*. The complainant may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

Please read the enclosed document entitled "OCR Complaint Processing Procedures," which includes information about:

- OCR's complaint evaluation and resolution procedures;

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

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