



ENGAGING UNIVERSITY SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

BEFORE THE MEETING

Determine your primary goals (what you want to achieve with your meeting) and develop the main “asks” that will lead to achieving your goals. It is best to review your meeting strategy with a campus expert from CIJA to ensure you are updated on context and the most recent developments that will affect your discussion.

Things to keep in mind:

- Focus on achievable items that are most likely to be acted on, such as safety in and out of the classroom, eliminating toxic environments, and enforcing existing policies.
- University presidents and other senior administrators always think of the whole campus environment. Demonstrating that you understand this will help your cause.
- Ensure your asks recognize the challenges of navigating academic freedom and freedom of expression on campus.
- Universities are bureaucratic institutions that have policies and procedures in place for everything. Focusing on the enforcement of these elements will likely yield more desirable outcomes.

DURING THE MEETING

- Approach the conversation through the lens of an advisor rather than a demanding stakeholder. This puts you in a position where the administration will see you as a contributor who cares about their success.
- Avoid threatening language that will cause the administrator to become defensive.
- Avoid focusing on negative public reactions against the university, including withholding donations.
- Share why this is personal to you.
- Offer to connect the administration with community organizations – Jewish Federation, CIJA, and Hillel.

AFTER THE MEETING

- We recommend creating a record of your conversation by sending a brief summary that includes a reiteration of the main points and asks.
- Share contact information for community organizations – Jewish Federation, CIJA, and Hillel

For further assistance, please contact:

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EXAMPLE

Main Goals:

1. Impress on the university administration that Jewish students, faculty, and staff do not feel safe
2. Remind the university they have a responsibility to eliminate the toxic environment on campus
3. Highlight the importance of not shying away from enforcing university policies effectively
4. Encourage greater involvement with community organizations

The Ask:

I am concerned after hearing reports from students, staff, and faculty feeling targeted by hate and harassment based on their identity at our university campuses. They continue to report feeling threatened and afraid in common spaces. Students are scared to go to class and to express their views. Their fear is not that their ideas will be subjected to uncomfortable critical inquiry, but that expressing their ideas will endanger their physical safety or lead to retaliation by instructors. This cannot be allowed to continue.

Some examples of what my community has witnessed on Canadian campuses and heard from Jewish campus community members these past few weeks include:

- Jewish students were harassed, property damaged, and even physically assaulted during hateful anti-Israel protests falsely identified as pro-Palestinian rallies
- Several recognized clubs, student unions, and even a university chaplain publicly condoned the terrorist actions of Hamas
- Posters of Israeli hostages were torn down on several university campuses
- Rallies on and off campus hosted by university clubs in partnership with the Palestinian Youth Movement – an organization associated with the terrorist-listed PFLP
- Faculty-endorsed anti-Israel sit-ins and rally participation for course credit
- A *mezuzah* was ripped from the doorpost of a Jewish student's home on campus
- Many on campus are hesitating to identify outwardly as Jewish by wearing a *kippah*, a Star of David, or installing a *mezuzah* in the doorway of their dorm room

Jewish people in Canada and around the world are reeling from the heinous terrorist attacks committed by Hamas in Israel on October 7, 2023. This series of massacres, rapes, and kidnappings targeted innocent civilians, from infants to the elderly, and has sparked a marked increase in antisemitism –including on Canadian campuses. As I'm sure you are aware, Hamas has, for more than 20 years, been designated as a terrorist entity by Canada. Their objectives, as laid out in their founding Charter are the annihilation of Jews and the destruction of the Jewish state.

I am here today to share some items I truly believe will make an immediate difference for the whole campus community:

- 1. Implement a zero-tolerance policy against antisemitism and glorification of terrorism.** Publicly condemn and formally investigate acts of antisemitic intimidation and glorification of terrorism, including the terrorist acts against Israeli civilians on October 7, that are on display at Canadian campuses. Make clear that all direct threats, incitement to violence, or support of international terrorism are unacceptable.
- 2. Develop a clear safety plan for students, staff, and faculty.** The well-being of all individuals, including Jews and Israelis on campus, is paramount. I encourage your office to work with campus Hillels and other key stakeholders, including campus security and local law enforcement, to develop and implement a safety plan.
- 3. Restate expectations for a safe and productive campus environment.** Put an end to the toxic campus environment by clearly defining the boundaries of what is and is not condoned in the quad or the classroom and enforcing institutional policies. Remind all campus members that academic freedom and freedom of expression are not absolute. Discrimination is not tolerated in our society. Jewish students should not be made to feel ostracized, singled out, or dismissed by educators, nor should they feel intimidated to share their opinion on Israel.
- 4. Connect with campus Jewish organizations.** Reach out to mainstream Jewish organizations and leaders serving Jewish students on campus to offer support, open clear channels of communication, and partner with them to assess and meet their needs.
- 5. Provide resources.** It is imperative to share campus wellness and security resources with students, staff, and faculty to ensure the mental and physical well-being of those impacted, both directly and indirectly, by the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas.

Our community institutions – campus Hillels, local Jewish Federations, and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) – are available as partners and resources to you during this difficult time. I recommend you contact CIJA (Scott Goldstein, Director of University Relations at CIJA, sgoldstein@cija.ca) to ensure you are connected with all relevant Jewish community resources.