

My name is Shai Davidai. I am an Assistant Professor at Columbia Business School. I am Jewish and Israeli. Since October 7, 2023—when Hamas raped, tortured, and slaughtered more than 1,200 of my people and kidnapped more than an additional 240 people—Columbia’s campus has been a hostile environment for Jews and Israelis like me. That is why Columbia is now under investigation by the U.S. Congress and is facing two lawsuits, brought by close to 20 Jewish students, for violations of their civil rights.

But to say that civil rights are being violated does not begin to capture what Jews and Israelis have been forced to endure on campus. Over the past months, Jewish students at Columbia have been locking themselves in their dorms to avoid being assaulted. They have been spat on, attacked, bullied, and vilified. Columbia has done nothing to stop pro-terror student organizations that justify, excuse, and celebrate the massacre of my people, and chant for their eradication “by any means necessary.” As if violence against my four-year-old Israeli niece and my 93-year-old Israeli grandmother would be justified acts of resistance by “freedom fighters”—acts worthy of celebration.

This is not an exaggeration. This is the reality of what it’s like being Jewish and Israeli at Columbia University since October 7.

Over the past eight months, Columbia University has, among other things:

- a. Received a “D” on an official report about antisemitism by the Anti-Defamation League.
- b. Repeatedly dismissed Jewish students’ concerns about their physical safety, prompting a prominent Jewish leader to urge students to evacuate campus.

- c. Failed to enforce the suspension of pro-terror student organizations and their leaders.
- d. Allowed multiple illegal protests to take place on campus and refused to address a Jewish student's concern about these protests.
- e. Allowed professors to teach classes inside an illegal encampment from which Jewish and Israeli students were denied entry and in which their physical safety could not be guaranteed. In doing so, the university denied these students' right for an education due to their religion, ethnicity, and/or nationality.
- f. Negotiated with pro-Hamas and pro-Islamic Jihad student organizations whose leaders and members have:
 - i. illegally occupied public spaces on campus.
 - ii. denied entry to these public spaces to Jewish and Israeli students, faculty, and staff who refused to denounce their identity.
 - iii. violently took over a university building and held a university employee hostage against his will.
 - iv. Chanted in support of the Houthis, a terrorist group that has been shooting missiles at American ships deployed to the Middle East and whose flag calls for Death to Israel, Death to America, and "a crusade upon the Jews"
 - v. Have called for the extermination of Israel and for "Death to the Zionist state."
 - vi. publicly stated that Zionists should not be allowed to live and should therefore be killed.
 - vii. publicly identified with, and expressed support, for Hamas

- viii. called for rockets to be shot at Tel Aviv and sided with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran as it was shooting droves of drones and ballistic missiles at Israeli civilian targets.
- ix. chased out of campus a Rabbi as he was escorting Jewish students to safety.
- x. invited the wife of Sami Al-Arian—a Kuwait-born American who was deported from the U.S. for providing material support to Hamas—to their illegal encampment.
- xi. welcomed to their illegal encampment Ilhan Omar—a member of a Congressional committee whose daughter was arrested for her pro-Hamas activity on campus.
- xii. amplified a call by a Hamas spokesperson for violence in Jerusalem.
- xiii. set up memorials for convicted terrorists on public spaces on campus.
- xiv. directed the Al-Qassam Brigades—the military wing of Hamas—to attack Jewish American students on campus.
- xv. invited speakers with known ties to terrorist organizations to lead a “Resistance 101” event, in which students were encouraged to express support for terrorism and were told that the October 7 massacre was a necessary and justified action.

Everything I had just noted has been well-documented and is known to the leaders of the university. In fact, in a recent lawsuit settlement, Columbia has admitted that Jewish and Israeli students are at risk on campus has vowed to therefore offer “safety escorts” to protect these

students' safety. To the best of my knowledge, not since the desegregation of the American education system have students needed safety escorts simply to attend class.

For the past eight months, there have been two Columbias: A Columbia in theory and a Columbia in practice.

- In theory, Columbia suspended two pro-terror student organizations seven months ago.. In practice, those organizations still organize protests on campus in support of Hamas, the PFLP, and the Islamic Jihad with complete impunity.
- In theory, Columbia suspended a handful of student leaders who invited to campus speakers with known ties to terrorist organizations. In practice, this suspension was never enforced and these students have continued to lead pro-terror activity on campus.
- In theory, Columbia's President testified in Congress that a professor who expressed support for Hamas and Hezbollah "has been terminated". In practice, this professor has said that no such thing has happened.
- In theory, Columbia has repeatedly stated that the pro-terror campus protests are unauthorized. In practice, the university has never dispersed even a single protest nor expelled the organizations responsible for them.
- In theory, Columbia University cares about the safety of its Jewish and Israeli students, faculty, and staff. In practice, it doesn't.

Minouche Shafik, the President of Columbia University, is personally responsible and must be held accountable for allowing our school to become an unsafe and unwelcoming place for the

Jewish and Israeli community. But President Shafik is not the problem. She is merely a symptom of a deeply entrenched antisemitic, anti-American, and pro-terrorist sentiment that has proliferated on Columbia's campus.

The problem is the administration, headed by Cas Holloway and Felice Rosan—Columbia's COO and General Counsel, who have personally allowed pro-Hamas organizations to terrorize Jewish and Israeli students with complete impunity.

The problem is the entire Board of Trustees who seem to care more about furnishing their summer homes than about the safety and wellbeing of Jewish students, faculty, and staff.

The problem is the faculty who openly support and celebrate Hamas:

- Professor Joseph Massad who, on October 8th, expressed his “jubilation and awe” at the murder, rape, torture, and kidnapping of Israeli civilians.
- Professor Mohamed Abdou, who openly expressed his support for terrorism, stating that he is “with the resistance, be it Hamas and Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad.”
- Professor Hamid Dabishi, who has stated that Israel is an “outpost of American military barbarism” and blamed Israel for “every dirty treacherous ugly and pernicious act happening in the world.”
- Professor Katherine Franke, who has justified terrorist attacks as “anti-colonial resistance,” has spoken in favor of violent attacks on Israel's border, and has openly claimed that Israelis are a danger on campus because we completed our mandatory military service.
- Professor Rashid Khalidi, who in the late 1970s was reportedly the spokesperson for the PLO (then still an active terrorist organization), has legitimized Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists as “resistance fighters,” and has smeared observant Jews as “indoctrinated.”

- Professor George Saliba, who canceled classes so that his students could attend anti-Israel protests.
- Professor Mahmood Mamdani, who has called for “the dismantling of the Jewish state” and has made multiple appearances at the illegal encampment on campus.
- Professor Marc Lamont Hill, who has publicly glorified convicted terrorists who have hijacked Israeli and American airplanes, orchestrated bombing attacks, attacked civilians in downtown Jerusalem with hand grenades.
- Professors Asim Ansari and Kamel Jedidi of Columbia Business School, who, along with over 100 other professors, signed a letter minimizing the massacre, torture, rape and kidnapping of civilians by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad as merely “a military response.”

These are the professors with whom American parents entrust their kids’ physical and mental wellbeing. These are the professors who teach the next generation of American doctors, lawyers, teachers, and social workers. These are professors who receive millions of dollars of federal funding for their research and teaching. If my son or daughter had to take a class with one of these professors, I wouldn’t be able to sleep at night. I don’t know how Jewish parents of Columbia students do it.

The systemic antisemitism, anti-American, and pro-terrorist ideology at Columbia is not a new phenomenon. The 2004 movie Columbia Unbecoming shows how many of these professors have been targeting Jewish and Israeli students for more than two decades.

It is not that Columbia University cannot deal with this issue. It is that Columbia refuses to do so.

For decades, there has been no accountability for professors who indoctrinate rather than educate young Americans. There has been no leadership, no taking of personal responsibility. In such a climate, it is not surprising that students feel complete impunity to spew their hatred toward Israelis, Jews, and the United States of America.

Columbia University is the largest private landlord in New York City. Yet, due to various exemptions, Columbia pays very little property taxes. On top of that, Columbia receives more than \$1,000,000,000 in federal funding. Simply put, Columbia is one of the largest taxpayer-funded private landlords in the country.

As a taxpayer, it is beyond disturbing to know that my money funds an institution that allows antisemitic and pro-terrorist rhetoric and activity to proliferate. To think that Americans from all over the country are funding this corrupt establishment is not only troubling, but deeply dangerous.

Over the past eight months, I have paid a personal price for speaking up. I receive threats on a daily basis. My home address and class schedule have been posted online, urging people to harass me. Members of these pro-terror organizations have publicly smeared me, my wife, my parents, and my late grandfather. They even published pictures of my two-year-old daughter and eight-year-old son. Yet, I refuse to be deterred.

I am not fighting for myself. I am fighting for every decent American who believes that antisemitism and support for terrorism have no place on college campuses. I am fighting for

every person – Jewish or non-Jewish – who believes that rape is never, never, never OK. I am fighting for the future of higher education.

I have paid, and continue to pay, the price for speaking up. Yet, I would rather pay the price for speaking up, than the price for staying silent.

Let me be clear: This is not about politics. The terrorists who kidnapped Keith Seigel, a 65-year-old American citizen from North Carolina, did not stop to ask him who he would have voted for in the upcoming elections. The professors who signed a letter calling the kidnapping of Omer Neutra, a 22-year-old American from Long Island, “a military response” never stopped to consider his views about Middle Eastern geopolitics. The student organizations that glorify Hamas’ kidnapping of Hersh Goldberg-Polin, a 23-year-old American who had his arm blown before being kidnapped into Gaza, do not care about his views regarding a two-state solution.

This is about hate. Hate for Israel, hate for the Jewish people’s right for self-determination, and hate for America and all that it stands for.

Columbia is an extreme case study of the antisemitic, anti-American wave washing over U.S. higher education, yet it is not unique. Like the U.S. Congress, I and many others have been asleep at the wheel for too long. It is time to take action. It is time to wake up.

Thank you.