

AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR JEWISH RESEARCH
ASSOCIATION FOR JEWISH STUDIES
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF HEBREW

Statement on North American Undergraduate Study in Israeli Universities

Over the past three years, the sharp decline in the number of North American undergraduate students in “study abroad” programs at Israeli universities has had a severe and deleterious impact on academic Jewish Studies Programs in the United States and Canada. Students in such programs have been shown to benefit greatly from the language study and other subject specialization opportunities that can be found only at Israeli universities.

As presidents of the three major academic organizations of Jewish Studies faculty in North America, we wish to express our alarm at the policies of North American universities that serve to dissuade, discourage, prevent or even prohibit students who decide to study in Israel from doing so.

We recognize legitimate concerns for safety and the cautionary advice given by the State Department about travel in Israel. But we believe that, rather than cancel programs or prohibit study, universities should base the decision to award university credit for academic work done elsewhere solely on academic criteria and that no penalty should be imposed on students who have chosen freely and of their own volition to participate in such programs.

We call upon the administrations of American universities to review their policies on study in Israel in order to remove obstacles created by administrative decisions that are not germane to academic standards, so as to allow students to pursue their legitimate academic goals.

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