

UNIVERSITY *of* MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

November 6, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your letter of concern.

As I have said many times and in many contexts, the safety and security of all University of Missouri students is our top priority. I have met with our Jewish student leaders this week and have provided them with the information in this letter.

The MU Police Department is investigating the incident of anti-Semitic tampering that you reference. MUPD applies a high degree of care to the investigation of all crimes, including those that may be motivated by hate and bias and receive training that includes recognition of hate crimes.

At their request, I refrained from a public statement so that my remarks would not compromise the investigation. Often, investigators responding to an incident know details that may assist them in apprehending the perpetrator. They ask us to withhold those details from the public for a period of time. In these situations, I am forced with a choice between issuing a broad condemnation of a nonspecific bias incident or compromising an investigation.

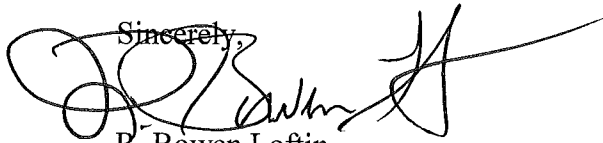
While I have not issued a public denunciation, I have expressed my horror and anger to our students directly. Support has been provided by our Residence Life staff and all those living in the affected residence halls have been informed of the event, have received support, and are being provided with resources on an ongoing basis. Our highest priority is identifying and pursuing criminal prosecution of the perpetrator. The substantive steps you reference to combat racism – including mandatory training, the hiring of a Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, a campus climate survey, and mandatory training for hiring committees – will include **full and comprehensive** content that addresses all forms of bigotry, including anti-Semitism.

We have robust anti-hate and anti-bias programs at the University of Missouri, and are working to make them mandatory for all. These include both the foundations of diversity and educational information on religious discrimination and hate crimes.



At the same time, the values of academic freedom must be upheld. Under the MU faculty bylaws, constitutional rights – including freedom of speech – may not be curtailed by the university. As a community of scholars, we welcome many opinions and strongly encourage that student groups, faculty and our entire campus community counter positions or events with which they do not agree through scholarly discourse, educational events, public debates and invited speakers. Pro-Israel groups, speakers and educational events are welcome on the MU campus.

We will do not tolerate bigotry or hatred of any kind on our campus and will protect all members of the campus community. I regret that my need to respect the integrity of the police investigation prevented a public statement. My priority remains to enforce a zero tolerance policy for bigotry at MU and the identification and prosecution of those who perpetrate hate.

Sincerely,

R. Bowen Loftin
Chancellor

Cc: Board of Curators
Garnett S. Stokes, Provost
Mizzou Hillel Staff

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin
Office of the Chancellor
105 Jesse Hall
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211

Dear Chancellor Loftin,

We are 36 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people who are very concerned about the safety and well-being of Jewish students at the University of Missouri. Many of our organizations wrote to you last spring expressing our concern over two separate incidents of antisemitic graffiti discovered at MU, as well as over an Honors Tutorial entitled "Perspectives on Zionism" which was scheduled to be taught in the Fall of 2015 by MU Biology professor George Smith, a well-known anti-Zionist.

We are writing to you today because we are troubled by reports of a swastika drawn out of feces, which was found on the wall of a bathroom in Gateway Hall on October 24.

While we applaud Residence Halls Association President William Donley, an MU student, for releasing a statement strongly condemning the vandalism and labeling it antisemitic and "an act of hate," we are dismayed that neither you nor any other MU administrator has yet to publicly address this act of blatant antisemitism, which clearly targets Jewish students and causes them to feel threatened and unsafe.

We know that just last month, the morning after MU students were harassed by someone using racist and hateful speech, you issued a vigorous condemnation of the incident, even sharing with the campus community a recorded message expressing your outrage over what had happened and your commitment to "end hatred and racism at Mizzou". You also described substantive steps, including educational initiatives, that your administration would be taking to address the problem of racism on your campus. We commend you for your prompt, vigorous and comprehensive response to this act of racism. At the same time, we urge you to treat blatant acts of anti-Jewish bigotry, such as a swastika smeared in feces on a dormitory wall, no less promptly, vigorously and comprehensively.

In addition, just as the MU Equity Office has acknowledged that certain kinds of expression constitute microaggressions that can cause members of targeted racial, ethnic and gender groups to feel discriminated against and harassed, it is no less important to acknowledge that certain kinds of anti-Israel expression that demonize and delegitimize the Jewish state and call for its elimination not only create a hostile environment for many Jewish students, but may foster acts of blatant antisemitism such as swastikas.

Of particular concern in this regard is the departmental sponsorship and implicit ideological endorsement of virulently anti-Israel events. For example, in November 2014 a talk by Saree Makdisi calling for the elimination of the Jewish state was sponsored by 6 MU departments along with the University Lectures Committee and the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative; in April 2015 a panel discussion entitled "Palestine in Context," during which MU Professor George Smith called for an end to Zionism, was sponsored by one MU department; and "Racism in Israel", an upcoming talk by noted anti-Zionist David Sheen, who compares Israeli Jews to Nazis, is being sponsored by two MU departments. Pope Francis, President Obama, British Prime Minister Cameron and French Prime Minister Valls have all stated that denying Israel's right to exist, as some departmentally-sponsored MU speakers have, is antisemitism.

We encourage you to demonstrate unequivocally your commitment to protecting Jewish students no less than other students on your campus, by doing the following:

- Swiftly, forcefully and publicly acknowledge that swastika graffiti is an act of antisemitism and will not be tolerated on campus.
- Publicly commit to educating University staff, including campus police, in identifying antisemitism and antisemitic hate crimes.
- Formally adopt the U.S. State Department's definition of antisemitism to fully and accurately identify all future acts of hate toward Jews and draw the distinction between acceptable criticism of Israel's policies and calls for the destruction of Israel which are unquestionably antisemitic and breed additional antisemitism.
- Allocate resources and publicly commit to educating students about antisemitism and anti-Jewish discrimination.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We look forward to working with you to protect Jewish students at the University of Missouri.

Sincerely,

Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity (AEPi)
 Alums for Campus Fairness
 AMCHA Initiative
 American Institute for Jewish Research
 Americans for Peace and Tolerance
 BEAR: Bias Education, Advocacy & Resources
 Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law
 Club Z
 Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA)
 CUFI on Campus
 David Horowitz Freedom Center
 Davis Faculty for Israel
 Eagles Wings
 Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET)
 Fuel For Truth
 Hasbara Fellowships
 Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel
 Iranian American Jewish Federation
 Israel Peace Initiative (IPI)
 Jewish Law Students Association at UCLA
 Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa (JIMENA)
 National Conference on Jewish Affairs
 Proclaiming Justice to the Nations
 Project Genesis
 Scholars for Peace in the Middle East
 Sigma Alpha Epsilon Pi
 Simon Wiesenthal Center
 StandWithUs
 Students and Parents Against Campus Anti-Semitism
 Students Supporting Israel at UCLA
 Students Supporting Israel at University of Missouri
 The Israel Christian Nexus
 The Israel Group
 The Israel Institute
 Training and Education About the Middle East (T.E.A.M.)

Zionist Organization of America

Cc: Board of Curators

Garnett S. Stokes, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Mizzou Hillel Director