



Harvard University Failed to Discipline Antisemitic Conduct Violations

In December 2023, the members of the Harvard Corporation affirmed that they “are united in our strong belief that calls for violence against our students and disruptions of the classroom experience will not be tolerated.” Unfortunately, Harvard’s record failed to make good on that commitment.

Documents obtained by the Committee show that Harvard has failed to impose meaningful discipline on antisemitic students who engaged in conduct in violation of University rules, including participating in the Harvard encampment, occupying a campus building, and disrupting classes.

As the new semester begins, not one of the 68 Harvard students referred for discipline for conduct related to the encampment is suspended, and the vast majority are in good standing. Moreover, between October 7 and the April 24 formation of the encampment, Harvard failed to impose *any* formal discipline on any students.

Prior to the encampment, Harvard only referred 12 students for discipline for conduct related to two antisemitic incidents: the November 16-17, 2023, occupation of University Hall and the disruption of classes with bullhorns and antisemitic chants on November 29, 2023. None of these students received any formal discipline and all remain in good standing.

Harvard has also failed to hold student groups accountable for antisemitic conduct. On September 10, the Harvard Crimson [reported](#) that Harvard lifted the April 22 suspension of the Harvard Undergraduate Palestine Solidarity Committee (PSC), making PSC a recognized student group eligible for University funding and resources once again. This reversal comes despite the role of PSC and its membership in organizing the unlawful Harvard encampment through the unrecognized group Harvard Out of Occupied Palestine (HOOP). The Crimson noted, “Though the PSC was not formally listed as part of the groups that organized the encampment, it shares a significant number of its members with HOOP, which took on the mantle of pro-Palestine activism at Harvard last semester. The PSC and HOOP continue to frequently coordinate their social media posts on Instagram.”

Harvard Lets Encampment Participants Off the Hook

- Of the 68 students against whom Harvard brought disciplinary cases related to the April 24 – May 14, 2024, Harvard encampment, none are suspended, 52 are in “good standing,” fifteen are not in good standing due to disciplinary probation, and one is on leave.

Then-Interim President of Harvard University, Alan Garber, conceded that the encampment “disrupted [Harvard’s] educational activities and operations,” and students’ “ability to sleep, study, and move freely about the campus.” He said that it created “safety concerns” that required limiting access to Harvard Yard and that encampment participants and supporters were reported to have “intimidated and harassed other members of our community.” Its continuation,



he said, “presents a significant risk to the educational environment of the University.” These facts make it clear that the encampment violated Harvard’s policies, and the university’s lack of adequate response to the encampment likely placed the University in violation of its obligations under Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* (Title VI). Despite the concessions from Garber, there was a complete lack of meaningful consequences for students who violated Harvard’s rules.

- Harvard College’s Administrative Board downgraded the sanctions of 35 students it initially voted to place on disciplinary probation from a period of six months or longer to periods of less than two months. This diminishment meant that none of these students initially slated for longer probation periods remained on probation at the start of the fall 2024 semester.
 - Harvard College’s Administrative Board initially voted to suspend five students for a year or more for encampment-related conduct violations, but then downgraded their sanctions to probation of no more than a semester. These students, who the Board itself characterized as having committed significant violations, therefore appear to have faced no consequential discipline.
 - A student who participated in the encampment and raised a Palestinian flag over University Hall, which sits on Harvard Yard, was initially informed he would receive a three-semester suspension. Thereafter, however, the consequential three-semester suspension was downgraded to mere probation until December 20, 2024. Four other students who participated in the encampment were each initially told they would be required to withdraw for two terms, but each of these suspensions was downgraded to the significantly weaker penalty of probation until October 21, 2024.
 - The students’ suspensions were downgraded to less significant probations despite disciplinary findings that the students’ conduct was “particularly serious” due to their past disciplinary records. An Administrative Board Subcommittee was appointed to investigate each incident under Harvard’s disciplinary processes. In these five cases, the Subcommittee concluded “that, given [the respective student’s] past disciplinary record at Harvard College, the Student Handbook violations are especially serious.” The disciplinary documents produced to the Committee indicate that at least three of the five students appear to have participated in the November 2023 occupation of University Hall.
 - Every Harvard College student who appealed their encampment-related disciplinary sanctions had their sanctions downgraded.
 - The Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR) found that five HGSE students violated University policies by participating in the encampment, but HGSE failed to impose any sanctions upon these



students. Instead, CRR chose to “affirm the importance of [these students’] participation in civic activities and encourage[d] [them] to continue engaging in meaningful discourse, provided that all future activities are conducted in a manner consistent with HGSE and University policies.” CRR wrote that its decision to forego any discipline whatsoever was “compelled” by “descriptions” of “the peaceable and orderly nature of the encampment.” This narrative is contradicted by President Garber’s aforementioned statement on the disruptive nature of the encampment and the risks it posed to Harvard.

At least four other Harvard professional schools failed to impose any meaningful sanctions for conduct violations related to the encampment. Two Harvard Law School students who participated in the encampment received only “informal warnings.” One Harvard Business School student who participated in the encampment received a warning and was required to complete 15 hours of community service. One Harvard Graduate School of Design student received no sanction whatsoever. Two Harvard Divinity School students who participated in the encampment were initially placed on involuntary leave, but then had this involuntary leave rescinded.

- Ten Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences students were sanctioned with disciplinary probation for a period ranging from six months to a year, two were found not responsible for having participated in the encampment, and one was admonished for their participation in the encampment.

No Consequences for Harvard Students who Occupied University Hall

- Nine Harvard students who occupied University Hall from November 16 to 17, 2023, received no formal disciplinary consequences at all. These students instead received informal “admonishments,” which according to Harvard, are “not considered a formal disciplinary action.” The students were reported to have “disrupted normal business operations by making loud noises and chanting, with the goal of occupying the building. Also, it is reported that access to hallways, conference rooms, kitchens, and bathrooms were blocked and building windows were tampered with. Finally, it is reported that the building was put on lockdown, university-wide events in the building were canceled, and because of the occupation Harvard Yard was closed to the public.” Despite the occupation of University Hall violating Harvard’s policies and disrupting academic activities, Harvard imposed no formal disciplinary consequences.

No Consequences for Harvard Students who Interrupted Classes with Bullhorns and Antisemitic Chants

- Five Harvard students who interrupted economics and statistics classes with bullhorns and antisemitic chants including “from the river to the sea” and “globalize the intifada” on November 29, 2023, received no formal disciplinary consequences, and were instead only “admonished.” Notably, two of these students had also taken part in the occupation of University Hall just weeks before but did not receive a harsher penalty.



Harvard acknowledged that the University failed to impose any formal discipline for antisemitic conduct violations between October 7 and the beginning of the encampment on April 24. Harvard acknowledged that the November 16-17 occupation of University Hall and the November 29 class disruptions were the only such incidents prior to the encampment for which Harvard students were even referred to the College's administrative board.

As these examples demonstrate, Harvard investigated and documented student violations of its policies, some of which were deemed to warrant semesters-long suspensions, but ultimately failed to enforce its own rules and impose meaningful discipline. Imposing such discipline would have been consistent with the Harvard Corporation's pronouncement that "calls for violence" and academic disruptions would "not be tolerated." The records, however, reveal that Harvard failed to fulfill this commitment and has permitted students to engage in such conduct with no real consequences.

By doing so, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce believes Harvard is in violation of Title VI. According to the Department of Education, a Title VI violation is likely to be found when:

1. A hostile environment based on race, color, or national origin exists;
2. The institution had actual or constructive notice of the hostile environment; and
3. The school failed to take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent the harassment from recurring.

The Harvard encampment, occupation of University Hall, interruption of classes with bullhorns, and other incidents amount to antisemitic harassment that created a hostile environment for Jewish Harvard students by interfering with and limiting those students' ability to participate in the services and activities of the University. Harvard had a responsibility under Title VI not just to end the hostile environment but also "take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to...prevent the harassment from recurring." By failing to hold students responsible for clear violations of university policy, including repeat offenders, Harvard has invited further ones thereby violating its Title VI obligation to protect its Jewish students.