

**Confidential and Subject to the Rules of the Administrative Board of
Harvard College**

**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF HARVARD COLLEGE
SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

February 16, 2024

I. The Complaint and Response

The Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (OAISC) is investigating a concern of misconduct involving an occupation of University Hall on November 16 and 17, 2023 involving [Redacted - PII] '24), [Redacted - PII] '24), [Redacted - PII] '25), [Redacted - PII] '24), [Redacted - PII] '24), [Redacted - PII] '24), and [Redacted - PII] (26). It is reported that on November 16 the students entered University Hall and 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. University Hall remained occupied until the morning of November 17, 2023.

Case Managers of the Administrative Board, [Redacted - PII] and [Redacted - PII], and Assistant Dean and Secretary of the Administrative Board, [Redacted - PII] individually met with [Redacted - PII]

[Redacted - PII]

[Redacted - PII] and their Board Representatives, the [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] House [Redacted - PII] the [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] the [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] and the [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] between November 27, 2023 and December 7, 2023, over Zoom, to explain the confidentiality rules of the College, the procedures followed by the Board in disciplinary cases, and the complaint that was made against them.

Additionally [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Associate Dean of Students [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Professor [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Professor [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Professor [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Professor [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Resident Dean [Redacted - PII] [Redacted - PII] and [Redacted - PII] was joined by personal advisor Professor [Redacted - PII]

Case materials were emailed to each student after their initial meetings. Each student responded to the charges by submitting an initial statement between November 30, 2023, and December 13, 2023. Each student's statement was exchanged with the other students on January 10, 2024.

On receipt of the full information, the Dean of the College appointed a subcommittee of the Board to meet with the student concerning these allegations. The subcommittee was composed of Assistant Dean for [REDACTED] (chair), and Dr [REDACTED] Senior Lecturer on [REDACTED]

The rules of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, in the section on "Standards of Conduct in the Harvard Community" in the *2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook*, state that,

It is the expectation of the College that all students, whether or not they are on campus or are currently enrolled as degree candidates, will behave in a mature and responsible manner. This expectation for mature and responsible conduct also encompasses accountability for one's own well-being, including responsible decision-making regarding physical and mental health. Further, the College expects every student to be familiar with the regulations governing membership in the Harvard community, set forth in the pages that follow. Because students are expected to show good judgment and use common sense at all times, not all kinds of misconduct or behavioral standards are codified here. The College takes all these diverse principles very seriously; together they create a foundation for the responsible, respectful society that Harvard seeks to foster among its students, faculty, and staff.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 49

The section on "Honesty" in the *2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook*, states that,

The College expects that all students will be honest and forthcoming in their dealings with the members of this community. Further, the College expects that students will answer truthfully questions put to them by a properly identified officer of the University. Failure to do so ordinarily will result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the requirement to withdraw from the College.

All students are required to respect private and public ownership; instances of theft, misappropriation, or unauthorized use of or damage to property or materials not one's own will ordinarily result in disciplinary action, including requirement to withdraw from the College.

A student who commits an offense against law and order during a public disturbance or demonstration or who disregards the instructions of any other University officer at such a time is subject to disciplinary action and may be required to withdraw.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 53

Additionally, the section on “Interpretation” under “Faculty Resolutions in the 2023-2024 Harvard College Student Handbook states that,

It is implicit in the University-wide Statement on Rights and Responsibilities that any unauthorized occupation of a University building, or any part of it, that interferes with the ability of members of the University to perform their normal activities constitutes unacceptable conduct in violation of the Statement and is subject to appropriate discipline.

Harvard College Student Handbook, Page 53

This Subcommittee Report will be shared with each student and they will be given the opportunity to respond in writing before the case is considered by the Board. The recommendations regarding possible outcomes included at the conclusion of this Subcommittee Report are a starting point for the discussion of the Administrative Board regarding this case. In all cases, the Board is not limited in its discussion and has the full range of sanctions allowed by the Faculty available to it.

II. Investigation of the Complaint

After reviewing all seven students’ personal statements and subcommittee meetings, it is clear that there were several commonalities that are worth summarizing here.

During the interviews, each student stated their goal for occupying University Hall was to impose three demands on the administration:

1. To call for an immediate ceasefire as a step towards Palestinian liberation.
2. To protect students’ free speech and provide institutional support to pro-Palestinian students.
3. To make clear that anti-Zionism is not antisemitism.

All students stated that they understood the university’s policy on building occupation and acknowledged the fact that they had been warned that failure to leave University Hall when the building closed would likely result in a disciplinary case. All the students also emphasized that by occupying University Hall they did not block hallways or doorways and, in no way did they mitigate the safety of its workers.

Redacted - PII Subcommittee Appearance

On January 23, 2024, Redacted - PII met with the subcommittee by Zoom. She was accompanied by her Board Representative Redacted - PII, Redacted - PII Resident Dean of Redacted - PII House, and her personal adviser, Associate Dean of Redacted - PII

During her appearance, [Redacted - PII] apologized for any emotional harm or disruptions caused by her actions and emphasized that the group did not block access to any of the spaces in University Hall and posed no threat to the occupants. [Redacted - PII] also commented on the fact that every faculty member who has mentored and taught her over the past four years has told her that she did a brave and principled thing, and they are so proud of her. Reflecting on the lessons she has learned from the incident, she stands by her actions on November 16th because she feels as though they are historically contextualized and informed by her scholarship, as a student of American History and Literature.

[Redacted - PII] Subcommittee Appearance

On January 29th, [Redacted - PII] met with the subcommittee by Zoom. They were accompanied by their Board Representative, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of the [Redacted - PII] and their personal adviser, Professor [Redacted - PII]

During their appearance, [Redacted - PII] emphasized the fact that they participated in the occupation not because they wanted to but because they felt compelled to as a Jewish member of the Harvard community. They feel as though their education as a Women and Gender Studies concentrator has taught them the power of solidarity, and the urgency to mobilize against systems of oppression. They emphasized their feeling of obligation to hold the university accountable for the safety of *all* of its students.

Reflecting on the lessons learned from the incident, [Redacted - PII] did say that they stand by what motivated them to occupy University Hall. They also expressed regret for any disruption or discomfort caused to any University workers, students, or members of the community. They summarized by saying how grateful they are for the intellectual and personal enrichment they have gained from Harvard, and by emphasizing that they feel strongly that it would be a moral failing on their part if they were unable to back the theory they have learned with the practice they hope will continue to govern their life.

[Redacted - PII] Subcommittee Appearance

On January 11, 2024, [Redacted - PII] met with the subcommittee by Zoom. They were accompanied by their Board Representative, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of the [Redacted - PII] and their personal adviser, Professor [Redacted - PII]

During their appearance, [Redacted - PII] emphasized that they have felt unsafe at Harvard over the past few months. They also made it clear that their decision to occupy University Hall was not uncalculated and was taken as a last resort after having spent weeks engaging in other “sanctioned actions” (attending marches and protests, signing petitions, writing emails, etc).

While acknowledging that it was in violation of the Harvard College Student Handbook, [Redacted - PII] also stated that they considered occupation as being consistent with the University's free speech policy.

[Redacted - PII] Subcommittee Appearance

On January 12, 2024, [Redacted - PII] met with the subcommittee by Zoom. They were accompanied by their Board Representative, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of the [Redacted - PII] and their personal adviser, Professor [Redacted - PII]

During their appearance, [Redacted - PII] noted that they anticipated facing disciplinary action from the Administrative Board. They understood that occupying a university building was in violation of Harvard policies but believes in the power of civil disobedience. They believed that their actions were showcasing support for their friends and peers who had been directly affected by campus events. Between their written statement and their appearance over Zoom, [Redacted - PII] shared that they believe the University has not done enough to support Gaza and have not done enough to support or protect those students speaking out against Israel's actions.

Reflecting on the lessons they have learned from the incident, [Redacted - PII] noted that they believe their actions are on the right side of history and that they will continue to advocate for the Palestinian people if Harvard continues to have financial ties to Israel. The student understands that their actions have consequences and recognizes the impact that their actions had on the faculty and staff of University Hall.

[Redacted - PII] Subcommittee Appearance

On January 22, 2024, [Redacted - PII] met with the subcommittee by Zoom. They were accompanied by their Board Representative, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] House, and their personal adviser, Professor [Redacted - PII]

During their appearance, [Redacted - PII] shared that their goals were the same as those of the group. They wanted to pressure the University to speak out more about the devastation in Gaza and emphasize the trauma suffered by Palestinian and Arab students. [Redacted - PII] understood that the occupation was a violation of University policies about occupying buildings.

Reflecting on the lessons they have learned from the incident, [Redacted - PII] shared that they have been reflecting on the impact the occupation had on the faculty and staff in University Hall and the impact on the community as a whole, specifically noting the cancellation of a concert. [Redacted - PII] shared that they stand behind the message but understand that their message could have been shared more thoughtfully and responsibly.

Redacted - PII Subcommittee Appearance

On January 16, 2024, [Redacted - PII] met with the subcommittee by Zoom. He was accompanied by their Board Representative [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of the [Redacted - PII] and his personal adviser, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] in [Redacted - PII]

During his appearance, [Redacted - PII] noted that their personal goal in the occupation was to get the University to make it clear that criticism of Israel is not antisemitism. He wanted to lend his voice to that cause. [Redacted - PII] made it clear that the intent of the occupation was to pressure the administration to hear the group's demands and they never intended to threaten the safety of the faculty and staff working in University Hall. [Redacted - PII] like the other students involved, recognized that their actions were a violation of University policies.

Reflecting on the lessons he has learned from the incident, [Redacted - PII] has been reflecting on the University's impact on culture and the roles that faculty, staff, and students play in creating that impact. They noted that Harvard occupies a very challenging place in society and that this protest action was their attempt to motivate the University to use their power to impact the situation in Gaza. [Redacted - PII] noted that he is not an adversarial person but felt obligated to stand up for what they believe is right. They also noted that part of civil disobedience is facing the consequences of their actions.

Redacted - PII Subcommittee Appearance

On January 12, 2024, [Redacted - PII] with the subcommittee by Zoom. She was accompanied by her Board Representative, [Redacted - PII] Resident Dean of [Redacted - PII] House, and her personal adviser, Professor [Redacted - PII]

During her appearance, [Redacted - PII] shared a number of thoughts on the incident and her reasons for participating in the occupation. [Redacted - PII] shared that her personal goals for the occupation were to showcase support for the pro-Palestinian students who were facing retaliation for their support of Palestinians in Gaza. [Redacted - PII] is Jewish and dealt with a great deal of grief after the Hamas attacks but was very concerned by the blanked feeling that criticizing Israel is anti-Semitic. She believed her actions were needed to counter the narrative on campus and in the media.

[Redacted - PII] concluded her appearance by sharing her reflections on the incident. This was their first act of civil disobedience and they have continued to engage in activism on campus. They recognize that the point of organizing is to raise awareness, not to put others at a disadvantage. [Redacted - PII] was very apologetic for the impact their actions had on the faculty, staff, and University

community. [Redacted - PII] shared that she wants her activism to be more aligned with the University moving forward as there are ways to work together to achieve goals.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

The subcommittee has found that these students understood campus policies regarding the unauthorized occupation of university buildings and understood their actions were in violation of these policies. Despite conversations and warnings from Deans [Redacted] and [Redacted] the students continued to occupy University Hall knowing they were in violation of campus policy and would be referred to the Administrative Board.

During each of their subcommittee meetings, the students voiced their concern for their peers while understanding the impact that their actions had on the operations of University Hall and the campus community. The students believe their cause is just, but each student also understood that their actions have consequences.

[Redacted - PII]

The subcommittee wishes to thank [Redacted - PII] for her participation in this process and her honesty and reflection. The subcommittee recommends that [Redacted - PII] be admonished for inappropriate social behavior. We recognize that some members of the Board may wish to consider disciplinary probation as a possible sanction.

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