

A brief FJP summary of events

The goal of this summary is to give context to colleagues who may not be aware of the tensions brewing on and off campus. We do not make any claim to "completeness" or objectivity, and instead we choose to highlight certain moments that community members may not have otherwise already heard about (or at the very least, have not been reminded about for some time) through various emails from administration. In light of the ways that some of these community-wide missives have portrayed our own students as closed-minded, immature, and insensitive, we will also emphasize instances in which students behaved in precisely the manner that administrators claim a model community member should: with openness, curiosity, and with a focus on building community. Throughout, we will also mention events happening outside of campus (either in Palestine or on other campuses at our peer institutions) in order to illustrate how out of step our administration has been with the pulse of the rest of the world.

Acronyms used:

AFSC= [American Friends Service Committee](#)

SJP=[Students for Justice in Palestine](#) ([BiCo chapter instagram](#))

FJP=[Faculty for Justice in Palestine](#) ([Haverford chapter instagram](#))

JVP=[Jewish Voice for Peace](#) ([BiCo chapter instagram](#))

HSP=[Haverford Students for Peace](#)

MSA=[Muslim Student Association](#) ([Haverford chapter instagram](#))

JSU=[Jewish Student Union](#) ([Haverford chapter instagram](#))

DASH=[Disability Action for Students at Haverford](#)

October 6, 2023

2023 is already the deadliest year on record for Palestinian children killed by occupation forces. Apartheid wall separating the West Bank from Israel proper stands for 20 years after ICJ ruled on its illegality. Experts' consensus is that Gaza will be literally unliveable in a mere handful of years.

October 7, 2023

Al Aqsa Flood, organized by Hamas/PIJ/other militant resistance groups. ~800 Israeli civilians (including children) killed, hundreds of others taken captive. Unclear how many dead killed by IDF crossfire. Many civilians uninvolved in the violence took the opportunity to break out of the open-air prison that is Gaza.

2nd week of October

Haverford SJP/JVP co-host collective learning session on history of Israel/Palestine. Made clear that all views (including ignorance) welcome.

Mid-October -- mid-November

BiCo SJP/JVP build on first event by organizing rallies/small walk-outs in solidarity with Palestinians.

November 25, 2023

Three Palestinian students (Kinnan Abdalhamid of Haverford, Hisham Awartani of Brown, Tahseen Ali Ahmad of Trinity) shot in a hate crime in Vermont for wearing kuffiyeh / speaking Arabic.

November 26, 2023

President Raymond sends out community-wide email announcing Kinnan's shooting. Message widely considered to be out of touch and insensitive, including by Kinnan's loved ones -- it denounces "hate" in the abstract and does not mention anti-Palestinian racism or Islamophobia.

November 27, 2023

Several Haverford faculty members officially [announce a Faculty for Justice in Palestine \(FJP\) chapter and put out an open letter](#) to contextualize the hate crime in Vermont in the ways that Pres. Raymond's message did not.

November 27, 2023

Students gather for a meeting to issue "Haverford Grievances" where they state, "Many students feel that they are uncared for, unheard, and feel concern and heartbreak over the treatment of their Palestinian peers particularly affected by the ongoing apartheid."

November 29, 2023

"Haverford Students for Peace" forms, in part in response to perceived lack of empathy/sensitivity towards Palestinian/Arab/Muslim students and administrative silence regarding what is already clearly a genocidal assault on Gaza. Already, more children have been killed in Gaza than in any of the previous four years, globally, in armed conflict.

Haverford Students for Peace make the following demands after careful deliberation with community members experiencing anti-Arab/Palestinian racism:

- 1) Academic leniency for students with family impacted
- 2) Hiring of culturally competent counselors
- 3) Support for faculty and student activism
- 4) Accountability and restorative action
- 5) Increased transparency from board of managers

The making of these demands are coupled with student representatives reaching out to faculty in their own home departments for the scheduling of honest and open dialog, so

that students and professors can collectively think through how best to move forward in these difficult times.

December 5, 2023

Bryn Mawr Palestine Coalition second meeting. A statement titled "Bryn Mawr Student Collective Grievances and Action Items" was issued and endorsed by 444 students, 2 professors, 61 alumni, 27 parents, and 49 student and faculty clubs.

December 6, 2023

Haverford Students for Peace (HSP) begins their sit-in, pledging to occupy Founder's Hall until demands are met. Several authority figures publicly imply that the key problem is HSP confusing "being listened to" with "getting everything they want." These condescending proclamations did not include any analysis of why people might want these things and what the stakes are regarding getting them, versus not getting them. For eight days, students maintain the sit-in, including: organizing teach-ins, film screenings, looking after one another re: COVID safety, negotiating with admin, etc.

December 12-13, 2023

Administration demands an end to the sit-in (threatening Dean's panels) after sit-in participants execute an action involving pillow cases stuffed with sheets, made to look like the white body bags used for murdered Palestinians. Throughout much of this, and after, administration is facing intense pressure from some board members (and perhaps also some alumni) to clamp down on pro-Palestine activism on campus (including threatening further Draconian disciplinary measures). In spite of support for (and participation with!) HSP from both Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and Jewish Student Union (JSU), accusations of antisemitism are weaponized.

After an all-night deliberation with each other, with other student groups, and with supporting faculty, student leaders decide to end the sit-in with a protest at Founder's Hall; unclear which, if any, demands met by administration.

Jan-Feb 2024

Genocide intensifies; Palestinian casualties number in the many tens of thousands, including thousands of murdered children.

February 24, 2024

JVP/SJP take the initiative to connect to local community organizers in Philly, Upper Darby, and Lower Merion, and organize a rally from campus to Suburban Square (owned by a real estate firm whose board of managers donate millions to AIPAC). Upon arriving at Suburban Square, marchers were met by very aggressive pro-Israel counter-protestors (sporting military fatigues, signs promoting the Jewish Defense League -- viewed as a terrorist organization by the FBI) who shouted horribly racist and

vitriolic things at Black and Brown marchers (e.g. calling them terrorists, to "go back to Gaza!" etc.). This incident greatly increased attention on Haverford from Zionist groups in Lower Merion. Administration is aware of the events and the vulgarities hurled at students but says nothing publicly about them.

February 19, 2024

An Emergency Plenary was initiated after the introduction of a [Ceasefire Resolution](#) by the Students' Council and Co-sponsors from the Muslim Student Association (MSA), the Jewish Student Union (JSU), and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP). In the resolution, students stated that,

[W]e (Haverford College) are a peace-seeking community within the United States that condemns violence in principle, and ... the violence in Gaza and Israel directly affects Palestinians and Israelis which impacts Jewish, Muslim, Arab, and countless other community members; therefore ... the Student Association of Haverford College calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza; and ... calls for local Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County, Philadelphia and Pennsylvania governments to support the call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire; and ... calls for Haverford College and peer educational institutions to stand for peace and anti-militarism to promote restoration of basic rights and that the security of civilians is prioritized."

Ten hours after SC announced the intention to present a Ceasefire Resolution at an Emergency Plenary, Chabad issued a [letter](#) via their texting service, Chaibot, urging students to abstain from the process, claiming that "engaging in this process is to declare a very strong stance and one which will not unify the Haverford community."

March 3, 2024

Emergency Plenary Closing Town Hall, with a pro-con debate. Overwhelming majority of students who spoke were pro. Start of a 3-day voting period.

March 5, 2024

Student Council (SC) Co-presidents, Jorge Paz Reyes & Maria Reyes Pachecho, present the results of the Emergency Plenary. A total of 1043 votes were cast: Yes: 914 votes (87.6%); No: 36 votes (3.5%) ; No Vote (a conscious decision not to vote): 93 (8.9%). The following is an excerpt from the email sent out by SC leaders to Haverford administration:

...[D]espite quorum being 1007, after carefully reading of the constitution, our election coordinators determined that they cannot count the votes from students studying abroad as part of the voting.

After calculating the count of students studying abroad, 75 votes were subtracted from the original amount, giving a new total of 968, making us 39 votes short from quorum.

This means that although the resolution DID pass, quorum was not reached. Therefore, we cannot present the resolution to the President of the College for their official signature as is stated in the plenary procedures.

It is important to point out that this is due to the 75% Quorum that specifically Emergency/Further Plenary requires. This is in contrast to the 66% Quorum required for Regular Plenary sessions.

Nonetheless, the results of this Emergency Plenary demonstrate how the campus is committed to see the suffering in the region stop.

March-April 2024

"Israeli Apartheid Month": students/activists/organizers all over the world plan events, teach-ins, and rallies to call attention to the apartheid status quo in Israel/Palestine. Takes place every year but is usually only one week (prolonged to a full month due to the genocide in Gaza).

March 26, 2024

Ceasefire Resolution passed the Spring Plenary 2024.

March 27, 2024

In collaboration with DASH (Disability Advocacy for Students at Haverford) and BiCo COVID Co (BiCo students organizing to mitigate the spread of COVID), SJP organized a teach-in originally called "Mass death on all fronts: teach-in on Israel's weaponization of COVID against Palestinians." Weeks before the event, the students advertised it on social media. Hundreds of emails poured into admin inboxes, complaining of antisemitism, on the grounds that the event's title plays into old anti-semitic tropes of Jews intentionally spreading disease. Student organizers were asked by admin to change the title of their event. They did -- it became "COVID in times of genocide: teach-in on how Israel uses COVID as a tool for settler colonialism in Palestine." The pressure from Zionists (both local and from afar, spurred on by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, an explicitly Zionist organization which invests in programs to "create deep connections with Israel, ensuring her safety, security, prosperity, and existence...") does not abate. The event happens; administrators are in attendance and do not offer any feedback to student organizers either before, during, or afterwards.

April 1, 2024

BiCo JVP releases a statement in solidarity with event organizers: "As Jewish students, we know firsthand the reality and weight of anti-semitism, and the history of blood libel.

However, this [event] was not an instance of anti-semitism... No accusations whatsoever were made against Jewish people, nor did the talk play into anti-semitic narratives..."

April 9, 2024

President Raymond's campus-wide email goes out in which she expresses "disappointment" in student organizers, etc.

April 14, 2024

Screening of the documentary film *Nova*, sponsored by the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship, the Department of Political Science, and the Department of Religion. Silent protest by students met with violent verbal abuses from external visitors. On April 22, 2024, Haverford Students for Peace and Bi-Co Jewish Voice for Peace posted a [detailed account](#) of the event as well as numerous videos recorded of the harassment ([here](#), [here](#), & [here](#)), requesting Haverford administration to make a public statement condemning the intimidation and hate speech perpetrated by the external visitors.

April 15, 2024

Visit of Jennifer Bing, National Director of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Palestine Activism Program, who offered updates on AFSC activities in Gaza, the West Bank, and other occupied Palestinian territories.

April 15, 2024

USC announces that they are officially canceling the valedictorian speech of graduating senior Asna Tabassum at the upcoming commencement. This comes on the back of immense Zionist pressure after alumni and donors noticed a pro-Palestine link on Tabassum's social media.

In the ensuing days, mass protests on campus erupt, demanding that Tabassum's speech be reinstated. On Friday, April 19, USC announced that *all* commencement speeches had been canceled.

April 17, 2024

President Raymond responds to the resolution. While stating that she accepts the resolution, she also clarifies that,

There is no ... College alignment or presidential alignment with the resolution; the resolution is limited to the Students' Association. Among the statement's components, the statement asks parties, including the College, to stand for a specific set of values. In keeping with my prior position on behalf of the College—that I would not and will not call for a ceasefire in Haverford's name—I do not commit Haverford or any parts of Haverford to taking any specific action or making public commentary in response to this resolution.

FJP members hear several different students independently register the irony of President Raymond suggesting in her recent campus-wide email that certain students are somehow corrupting Plenary, when at the same time her refusal to engage genuinely with the democratic outcome of Plenary is what actually leads many students to lose faith in the process.

Meanwhile, Minouche Shafik, the president of Columbia University, testifies in front of congressional Committee on Education and the Workforce re: the spread of anti-semitism on campus. For months, her administration has been preparing for this by intensely clamping down on Pro-Palestine student activism, including:

- The failure to address in any serious manner the [attack by use of a chemical weapon on protestors at an on-campus rally](#);
- the failure to address the repeated [racist and Islamophobic harassment committed by a full-term faculty member](#) targeting students and other community members;
- the [hiring of private investigators who attempted to break into the dorm rooms of students](#) suspected of engaging in Pro-Palestine organizing.

Administrators also allegedly required students to show them their private text messages before summarily suspending them.

April 17-18, 2024

Students at Columbia set up a Gaza Solidarity Encampment on campus grounds on a field designated specifically for protest and rallies. Protestors demand that Columbia fully divest from Israeli holdings.

Columbia administration responds by [officially requesting mass arrests from the NYPD](#), who oblige. Administration justifies this by claiming the students are trespassing— they first suspend all participating students in order to make this claim.

Many more students and other community members arrive to continue the protest. Even students who are arrested return to the protest upon release, making clear that they will do so again and again if necessary.

National SJP social media calls on all SJP chapters to protest in solidarity with Gaza and with students at Columbia, with the aim of sparking a mass nationwide student movement.

April 19, 2024

Haverford FJP issues [statement](#) titled "A Truly Inclusive Learning Community: FJP Perspective," published as an op-ed in *Clerk*, where they state,

In this invitation, we are calling for genuinely radical (as in, *pertaining to the roots of an issue*) empathy and into building community...

...We are witnessing a genocide, and contrary to the messaging some in our administration have put out, this is a genocide in which we — as representatives of a prestigious academic institution in the United States — are all implicated. It is simply not morally responsible for administrators to claim a right to silence from the point of view that this has nothing to do with higher education. Every university in Gaza has been destroyed. Many of us have Palestinian colleagues who have been displaced, injured, targeted for assassination, and murdered.

This reality punctures the Haverford bubble on a daily basis, and there can be no “radical empathy” without engaging with this, which is after all *at the root* of all of the conflicts and tensions we’ve experienced as a campus community over the last 6 months. And — especially in light of the plenary resolution in which an overwhelming majority of students expressed their views — we call on our administration to follow the example of the growing number of legislators, public figures, artists, creatives, scholars, and now university presidents who have called for a permanent and lasting ceasefire.

Inspired by the courage of Columbia students, solidarity protests crop up at Yale, Harvard, USC, UNC, Princeton, MIT, Berkeley Law, Boston University, Washington University, SUNY Stonybrook, NYU, University of Michigan, and other schools.

In particular, Yale students camped on Beinecke Plaza to press board of trustees to divest from Israel and all military weapons manufacturing. Beinecke Plaza is the same spot where in 1986 Yale students set up a shanty to demand Yale divest from apartheid South Africa. As of this writing more student actions are breaking out around the nation.

As for our own campus, the most recent development is that [HSP is merely calling](#) for an acknowledgement of the harassment students experienced on April 14, an institutional condemnation of that sort of behavior, and accountability from those responsible for hosting and sponsoring the event.