



Resolution 5 of the 60th Session of the Pitzer College Student Senate (60-R-5)

Legislation Information

Introduced: February 4, 2024

Status: Approved February 11, 2024

Topic: A Resolution in support of suspending Pitzer study abroad programs with Israeli universities in response to the call for principled solidarity in the struggle against state oppression

WHEREAS, in 2005, [175 Palestinian civil society organizations](#), including the Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUUPE), issued a call for principled solidarity with Palestinian civil society, asking for an academic boycott of Israeli universities as complicit actors in Israeli apartheid, in order to support the Palestinian struggle for human and political rights, including the right to live as free human beings;

AND WHEREAS, [Amnesty International](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), [B'Tselem](#), and the [UN Special Rapporteur](#) on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories declared that the state of Israel is committing apartheid and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people;

AND WHEREAS, The 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the 1998 Rome Statute to the International Criminal Court (ICC) define apartheid as a crime against humanity ([see here](#) and further links below);

AND WHEREAS, [Israeli universities are complicit](#) in the Israeli state's regime of oppression against Palestinians ([see](#) and [see also](#)), including by providing research and development of military weapons and surveillance technologies used in the denial of basic human rights to Palestinians;

AND WHEREAS, Israeli universities fail to provide protections on their campuses for (i) the exercise of academic freedom and campus speech rights in support of Palestinian human and political rights ([see](#)), and (ii) the freedom of association of Palestinian students on their campuses;

AND WHEREAS, Israeli universities systematically discriminate against Palestinian students enrolled in those universities, including in course registration and the selection of [educational programs](#) and majors;

AND WHEREAS, Israeli academic institutions have failed, individually and collectively under the state-controlled Council for Higher Education, to act in support of the right to education and academic freedom at Palestinian universities (located in the West Bank and Gaza);

AND WHEREAS, Pitzer’s Israeli university exchange partner, the University of Haifa, is a pillar of the Israeli Military Academic Complex, which comprises [three Israeli military colleges](#) and holds courses at the Israeli military's Gilot base, considered an [extension of the University of Haifa](#); and the University of Haifa [boasts](#) that the three military colleges "form the backbone of the [Israeli military's] elite training programs";

AND WHEREAS, Israeli scholar Dr. Maya Wind writes in her book, *Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom*, “The Israeli state’s military industries, and its universities have always been co-constituted. Universities have birthed, funded, and advanced their scientific research through the Israeli security state, and Israeli weapons, corporations. Israeli universities, train, soldiers, and security state personnel as students, so that they can hone their capabilities to maintain the military governance of the Occupied, Palestinian Territory, while producing policy recommendations to thwart Palestinian mobilization and growing international scrutiny. They offer their campuses, resources, students, and faculty to aid in the development of technology and weaponry deployed against Palestinians, and then sold worldwide as “battle proven.” From fighting to become civilian institutions, university campuses, are continually expanding their operations, not only as military training bases as weapons laboratories for the Israeli state.”;¹

AND WHEREAS, Dr. Maya Wind documents in her book, the University of Haifa boasts its status as the most racially diverse Israeli university but it has by far the most severe restrictions on the freedom of Palestinian students out of any Israeli university; University of Haifa has a zero tolerance policy for Palestinian organizing and holds fundraisers to buy additional gear for IOF soldiers, and when Palestinian students attempted to peacefully commemorate the Nakba, students were suspended by Haifa administration;²

AND WHEREAS, the state of Israel is complicit in committing total scholasticide, having systematically [“destroyed every university in Gaza”](#);

AND WHEREAS, U.S. academic institutions facilitate Israeli universities’ complicity in and normalization of Israeli apartheid, settler colonialism, and ethnic cleansing, by engaging in academic exchanges with Israeli universities;

AND WHEREAS, the [Middle East Studies Association](#), the leading learned society concerned with the region, has extensively debated an institutional academic boycott resolution and passed it, with a majority of 80% of its voting members supporting the resolution, indicating a broad scholarly consensus of area experts on this matter;

AND WHEREAS, the [American Anthropological Association](#), a learned society whose members also hold notable areal expertise in regard to Palestine and Israel, has also extensively debated an institutional academic boycott resolution and passed it, with a

¹ Wind, Maya. *Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom*. Verso, 2024. pg 111

² Wind, Maya. “Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom, A Talk with Maya Wind and Robin DG Kelley”, 6 February 2024, Benson Auditorium, Claremont, California.

majority of 71% of its voting member supporting the resolution, further indicating a broad scholarly consensus of area experts on this matter;

AND WHEREAS, Pitzer College, notably beyond many of its peer institutions, has committed itself to an education that centers social justice and social responsibility and to institutionally uphold its core values, [Pitzer College's Radical Roots](#) demand a radical present;

AND WHEREAS, Pitzer College has a notable track record of institutionally upholding its values in several ways, including but not limited to its past support for (i) LGBTQ+ rights by cutting all ties with ROTC (thus [establishing an institutional boycott of ROTC](#)) (ii) climate action as the first college or university in Southern California to [completely divest from fossil fuels, thus creating the Breakthrough Fossil Fuel Divestment-Climate Action Model](#) (iii) the South African struggle against apartheid [by divesting \\$2.1 million from its stock portfolios to protest South Africa's official policy of racial segregation](#), from which the Israeli government models [its practice of apartheid](#);

AND WHEREAS, [scholars of genocide](#), respected human rights lawyers and institutions ([see](#), and [see also](#)) have attested that the state of Israel intends to and/or is actively committing genocide against Palestinian civilians;

AND WHEREAS, South Africa, a post-apartheid state, charged Israel with genocide at the International Court of Justice in January 2024, with the support of Malaysia, Jordan, Turkey, Colombia, Bolivia, The Maldives, Namibia, Pakistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Brazil;

AND WHEREAS, as [genocide scholar Raz Segal writes in Jewish Currents](#) the situation in Israel and Palestine is “a textbook case of genocide unfolding in front of our eyes”;

AND WHEREAS, as [“never again” means never again for anyone](#);

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Pitzer College Student Senate demands Pitzer College suspend its existing study abroad agreement with Haifa University and not commence any other exchanges or programs with Israeli universities until Israeli universities end their complicity in Israeli apartheid and ethnic cleansing, including the universities' discrimination against their own Palestinian students and their failure to support academic freedom and the right to education at Palestinian universities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this policy pertains to Israeli universities only and not to any individual scholars or students and not to *communication* with individual scholars and students as Palestinian civil society's call for solidarity urges the academic boycott of Israeli institutions, rather than individuals;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, be it further resolved that this policy does not prevent the admission of Israeli students to Pitzer, but applies strictly to Pitzer establishing institutional relations with Israeli universities, meaning further that this policy does not prohibit Pitzer students from applying to programs at Israeli universities on the very same basis as to other “non-approved” programs (as Pitzer calls them);

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution, in conjunction with the possible termination or suspension of Pitzer’s institutional relationship with the University of Haifa due to any other applicable college policies, is necessary as closing Pitzer’s study abroad program at the University of Haifa without confronting the University’s lack of social responsibility practice³, equitable student engagement⁴, and environmental sustainability⁵ is a betrayal of Pitzer’s core values;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon its approval this legislation shall be sent to student, staff, and faculty listservs, Pitzer President Strom Thacker, Dean of Faculty Allen Omoto, the Chairs of the Pitzer College Diversity Committee, Academic Planning Committee, Curriculum Committee, Study Abroad and International Programs Committee, and Faculty Executive Committee, all staff members in the Study Abroad Office and Board of Trustees Chair Don Gould;

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, upon approval this Resolution is added to the agenda of the next College Council meeting.

³ Siegel-Itzkovich, Judy. “Israeli IDF Reservists Handed Nis 2,000 University Scholarships.” *The Jerusalem Post* | *JPost.Com*, www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-771355#google_vignette. Accessed 9 Feb. 2024.

⁴ Kadari-Ovadia, Shira. “Israeli University Suspends Eight Students Claiming They Supported Hamas on Social Media.” *Haaretz.Com*, *Haaretz*, 1 Jan. 2024, www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-01-01/ty-article/.premium/israeli-university-suspends-eight-students-claiming-they-supported-hamas-on-social-media/0000018c-c69a-ddba-abad-c6bb88f60000.

⁵ Lawal, Shola. “How Israel’s Flooding of Gaza’s Tunnels Will Impact Freshwater Supply.” *Al Jazeera*, *Al Jazeera*, 5 Feb. 2024, www.aljazeera.com/features/2024/2/3/israel-floods-tunnels-with-seawater-what-impacts-on-gazas-water-supply.