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Jewish Students may add their name to this letter by [completing this form](#).

A Letter from Jewish Students of Rutgers University

Since October 7th, a great deal has been written *about* the experiences of Jewish students at Rutgers University. Very little of it has been written *by* Jewish students at Rutgers. We, the undersigned Jewish students and recent graduates of Rutgers University, would like to share our experiences of the past academic year in the hope of conveying the hurt, pain, and isolation that many of us have suffered and suggesting ways that the entire university community might do better in the future, not just to support its Jewish students, but to create a more tolerant climate for all its members.

On October 7th we were horrified watching as 1200 of our brothers and sisters were slaughtered by Hamas in southern Israel, with hundreds being taken hostage into Gaza. Later, we learned that these brutal killings and abductions came with the added [horror of mass rape](#). Some of us knew those who were killed or those still being held hostage by Hamas. These horrors recalled the darkest moments in Jewish history. The pogroms of Russia, [the Farhud](#), the Holocaust, all were emulated on October 7th by Hamas.

Equally shocking was the way in which we were abandoned in the following days and months. People we once considered our friends celebrated Hamas's atrocities. Our peers defended this act of “resistance,” calling it justified and deserved. We should have been prepared for this. All throughout Jewish history our slaughter and persecution have been justified. Whether in the name of “religion,” “ethnic purity,” or (in our case) “decolonization,” the murder of Jews is always given a “reason” that justifies our deaths. And in the year 2023 (and still in 2024) we, the Jews at Rutgers University, were condemned as “colonizers” or “perpetrators of genocide” deserving of these atrocities.

Student groups connected to national organizations quickly mobilized in support of terror, conveying to us that we would not be safe and welcome at the university many of us called home. With chants of “colonizers go home,” “globalize the [intifada](#),” and “from water to water Palestine is Arab,” these groups made abundantly clear to us and the broader university community how they felt. They took over university buildings, shut down university events, and

by staging an unauthorized encampment and forcing the delay of thousands' final exams, they forced their way into influencing university policy. In short, they have taken over our university.

These students weren't alone. They had the support of many faculty and staff who guided them in tactics of intimidation and menacing protest, and those faculty and staff members ultimately assisted the students in negotiating their demands with the administration. The actions of these faculty and staff have only added to the isolation experienced by Jewish students. Some of them have allowed for and perpetuated antisemitic behavior in their own classrooms. Jewish students have been forced to leave classes and in some cases change their areas of study altogether.

We have no objection to pro-Palestinian protests occurring on our campus. To the contrary, we want our administration to permit protests of all kinds, protect free speech, encourage difficult conversations, and foster dialogue. But what we have witnessed over the past seven months has been none of this. Student groups that actively prevented the speech and expression of others have faced no accountability. Yes, we are thankful that President Holloway has justly defended and reaffirmed our relationship with Tel Aviv University. However, if we want to make our campus a better place, it needs to start with the enforcement of the code of conduct. We only ask that [the rules outlined](#) by the university be enforced and that the flagrant violators of these rules immediately face consequences.

So, we ask the administration simply to uphold its [promise to us of a beloved community](#), one in which Judaism and the Jewish people's historic connection to Israel are understood, appreciated, and respected. Our desire is nothing more than for our university to once again become a place where all peoples are welcome and treated equally, in a tolerant environment where we can all pursue knowledge in a spirit of peace and empathy for others.

Jewish Students may add their name to this letter by [completing this form](#).

Signed:

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