



U.S. Department of Education Opens Investigations into Anti-Semitism Complaints Against Yale, UMass-Amherst, Scripps College, American University and Fulton County

(Washington, D.C., March 20, 2025) – The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is opening investigations into complaints filed by **The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law** and **Anti-Defamation League** (ADL) against **Yale University**; **University of Massachusetts Amherst**; and **Scripps College**. In addition, the Department is opening complaints against **American University**, filed by the **Brandeis Center** and **Jewish on Campus** (JOC), and the **Fulton County School District** filed by the **Brandeis Center** and the **National Jewish Advocacy Center** (NJAC) for allegations of anti-Semitism against students.

Yale University (Connecticut)

The Yale complaint, filed by the Brandeis Center and ADL, alleges that Jewish and Israeli students have been pushed, obstructed and threatened trying to move about campus. Jewish and Israeli students have been repeatedly harassed in the classroom and elsewhere on campus, precluded from using Yale’s main library and Yale Law School library, obstructed and prevented from moving freely around campus, and had counterfeit “bloody” hundred-dollar bills that accused Israel of genocide dropped on their heads at the main dining hall. The association of Jews and money has fueled anti-Semitism throughout history. Jewish students have missed numerous classes, meetings, and extracurricular activities. Some hide out in their dorm rooms; others avoid campus altogether. More information can be found **here**.

University of Massachusetts Amherst (Massachusetts)

Per the UMass-Amherst complaint, filed by the Brandeis Center and ADL with the help of Holzman Vogel and Libby Hoopes Brooks & Mulvey law firms, the Department of Education will be investigating a violent and disturbing physical assault where a Jewish student was called a “Zionist s***bag” and then punched and kicked repeatedly. After initially condemning the attack, the university spent nearly six months ignoring the victim’s requests to address the matter and hold his attacker accountable. Making matters even worse, the victim was bizarrely subject to a no-contact directive without any basis provided, told he must stay away from members of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), but the SJP members could still approach him, creating a dangerous dynamic. More information on the complaint can be found [here](#).

Scripps College (California)

The Scripps complaint, filed by the Brandeis Center, ADL and Arnold & Porter, alleges the university repeatedly abandoned Jewish and Israeli students targeted by anti-Semitic harassment. A student wearing a Star of David was told to remove her Jewish necklace. That student hears anti-Semitic comments two to three times a week, including that Jews are immoral and “rich and control the media.” Her peers have ostracized her, and she has lost friends for attending weekly Shabbat dinners and studying Torah with the campus rabbi. Multiple articles in the Scripps student newspaper contain shocking examples of anti-Semitic tropes. And the Motley Coffeehouse, the primary location for Scripps students to study together, socialize, and host events, described as the heart of the Scripps College campus, has repeatedly excluded and become an unwelcoming place for Scripps Jewish students. More information on the complaint can be found [here](#).

American University (Washington, DC)

The American University complaint, filed by the Brandeis Center and JOC, alleges that AU was fully aware of the pervasive and hostile environment for Jewish students, and not only ignored it, in some cases, it chose to retaliate against Jewish whistleblowers by subjecting them to disciplinary proceedings. The complaint details vandalism, an Israeli student being spat on repeatedly, and Jewish students being harassed, targeted and discriminated against. Swastikas have been drawn on the dorm doors of Jewish students, a Jewish student’s recital poster was vandalized with anti-Semitic language and symbols, posters of innocent hostages have been

continually torn down without consequence, and Jewish students have been shunned and marginalized in classrooms by peers and faculty. More information on the complaint can be found [here](#).

Fulton County School District (Georgia)

Filed by the Brandeis Center in conjunction with Jewish Americans for Fairness in Education (JAFE) and NJAC, this Title VI complaint with the OCR against the Fulton County School District (FCSD) was filed over persistent anti-Semitic bullying and harassment against Jewish and Israeli students that took place in elementary, middle, and high schools across the District. The complaint documents numerous incidents showing how FCSD fostered a hostile climate that has allowed anti-Semitism to thrive in its schools at the hands of students, teachers and administrators. FCSD has ignored pleas from Jewish and Israeli parents whose children have faced increasing physical and verbal harassment, and the District has denied the anti-Semitic nature of the incidents. More information on the complaint can be found [here](#).

“There has been some concern around what changes to the Department of Education would mean for fighting campus and K-12 anti-Semitism. We are pleased to see the Department continuing to move forward rapidly on Title VI complaints, and in some cases, they are well exceeding historical norms for prompt action,” **said Hon. Kenneth L. Marcus, chairman of the Brandeis Center and the former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education who ran OCR during two administrations.** “While the Anti-Semitism Task Force is investigating ten campuses and OCR has warned sixty of them, the federal government has the bandwidth and the will to expand its investigations well past the initial campuses – and they are clearly just getting started. These public-private partnerships remain vital.”

“We welcome the Department of Education’s move to open investigations into ADL and the Brandeis Center’s joint filings at UMASS Amherst; Yale University; and Scripps College,” **said ADL VP of National Litigation, James Pasch.** “The experiences of the Jewish students at these institutions have been emblematic of what we have seen across the country, and that must change, and it must change now. Jewish students being threatened, harassed, and in some instances assaulted, have no place on our campuses, and we hope these investigations will yield positive changes that reverberates on campuses coast-to-coast.”

“Jewish students deserve equal access to a safe campus environment. American University has failed to provide that, so we took action,” **said Jewish on Campus CEO and Co-Founder Julia Jassey.** “We welcome this investigation from the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, which we expect to hold the university administration accountable and lead to a safer campus environment for all. We also echo the call from students that with impending changes and restructuring to the Department of Education, the federal government must continue to protect the rights of and access to educational opportunities for students from all protected backgrounds.”

“We are thrilled that the Department of Education has opened an investigation into Fulton County, and we are encouraged that the OCR is not falling for the typical excuses,” **said Mark Goldfeder, CEO of NJAC.** “There is a difference between protected political speech and thinly-veiled anti-Semitism, and this case highlights the very real danger of what can happen when perpetrators and administrators alike are allowed to confuse speech with acts and conflate politics with demonizing and discriminatory hatred. God willing the final result will be a safer space for all.”

The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law is an independent, unaffiliated, nonprofit corporation established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. LDB engages in research, education, and legal advocacy to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses, in the workplace, and elsewhere. It empowers students by training them to understand their legal rights and educates administrators and employers on best practices to combat racism and anti-Semitism. The Brandeis Center is not affiliated with the Massachusetts university, the Kentucky law school, or any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice.

ADL is the leading anti-hate organization in the world. Founded in 1913, its timeless mission is “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to protect democracy and ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

The National Jewish Advocacy Center (NJAC) is a leader in combatting antisemitism by developing and supporting innovative legal solutions that drive change. NJAC leverages the power of the American judicial system to combat antisemitism by aggressively prosecuting acts of hate, assisting the community with legal representation, training the next generation of civil rights advocates and engaging law makers, community organizations and other stakeholders.

Jewish on Campus (JOC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by Jewish college students, for Jewish college students. Jewish on Campus empowers Jewish student leaders to combat antisemitism on college campuses.