



Office of Community Concerns and Resolution

Levermore Hall, Suite 106 One South Avenue

P.O. Box 701

Garden City, NY 11530

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

August 15, 2025

VIA EMAIL TO: [REDACTED]

Dear Professor [REDACTED]

As you are aware, the University engaged external, third-party investigators, [REDACTED] Esq., and [REDACTED], Esq., of Venable LLP., to conduct a review of the allegations that you reported to the Office of Community Concerns & Resolution. You alleged that the Respondent violated the University's [Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) ("the Policy") by:

Creating a hostile environment for Adelphi's Jewish community, due to the following:

- It is alleged that on or about and in between fall 2024 through present, the Respondent's personal social media activity on Instagram and "X" is creating a hostile environment for Adelphi's Jewish community, in violation of the Policy.
- In addition, it is alleged that the Respondent's position as the faculty advisor for Adelphi's Students for Justice for Palestine and as a member of Adelphi's Bias Response Team, in connection with their social media posts, contributes to the alleged hostile environment for Adelphi's Jewish Community.
- It is alleged, due to the above, Jewish students may be reluctant to enroll and/or participate in the Respondent's courses and/or consult with the Bias Response Team.

In performing a review of the complaint, the Investigators interviewed the available parties and collected documentation as appropriate/available.

Adelphi University is committed to providing a pleasant and collegial environment; and an environment that is free from discrimination for employees, students, guests and visitors.

Definitions

Adelphi's Policy defines a hostile environment as, "A hostile environment exists when: harassing conduct on the basis of actual or perceived membership in a protected class has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic experience (including social and residential participation) or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive or abusive environment. A single or isolated incident of harassment may create a hostile environment if the incident is sufficiently severe. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment, particularly if the harassment is physical. Off-campus conduct can contribute to a hostile environment if it "has an on-campus impact or affects members of the campus community."

Harassment is defined as, “unwelcome conduct (whether visual, verbal, non-verbal, physical or effectuated through electronic means) on the basis of an individual’s actual or perceived protected status when the unwelcome conduct: creates an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive working or learning environment (including social and residential experiences); [or] unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work or academic performance....”

Findings of Investigation

The below findings were shared with the Office of Community Concerns and Resolution from the Investigators, and are reproduced below. The University is aware that an outcome letter related to another matter was shared with the media. Given this, the name and identifying information of the Respondent has been redacted to maintain their privacy:

“Findings Regarding Allegations Related to Social Media Activity

Based on the interviews conducted, a review of all available evidence, and a review of the credibility of all parties, there is sufficient evidence, based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, to find that [THE RESPONDENT’S] personal social media posts have created a hostile environment for Adelphi’s Jewish community in violation of the Policy because they are: (i) harassing conduct; (ii) on the basis of actual or perceived membership in a protected class; (iii) that creates an intimidating, hostile, and offensive environment for Jewish community members on campus.¹ In addition, Venable found that [THE RESPONDENT’S] leadership positions with SJP and the BRT, in connection with [their] social media posts, contribute to that hostile environment.

After analyzing [THE RESPONDENT’S] social media posts individually and collectively using factors such as nature, content, and frequency, Venable determined that a reasonable person would consider them to be unwelcome conduct that is intimidating, hostile, and offensive to Adelphi’s Jewish community. In general, many witnesses found the posts to be either objectively or personally offensive. Witnesses described the posts using terms like “troubling,” “anticommunity,” hateful,” “scary,” and “over the top.” While [THEIR] biographies on both Instagram and Facebook contain an “opinions are my own” disclaimer, each individual post does not expressly say that [THEY] posted them in [THEIR] personal, not professional, capacity, which could lead a reasonable person viewing screenshots of those posts to infer that [THEY] posted them in [THEIR] capacity as an Adelphi professor. Specifically, individuals who are forwarded screenshots of [THEIR] posts will not see this disclaimer.

In addition, Venable found that a reasonable person would consider [THEIR] posts to be distinct from political criticism of the Israeli government and instead reflect commentary

¹ Pursuant to Section III of the Policy, a hostile environment exists if harassing conduct specifically “has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic experience (including social and residential participation) or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive or abusive environment” (emphasis added). The Policy does not require Adelphi to establish any interference with an individual’s work or academic experience to find a violation. A finding that certain conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or abusive environment is sufficient.

about national origin, shared ancestry, and ethnic characteristics. For example, many of [THEIR] posts do not comment on the “Israeli government” or the “Israeli state” and instead broadly target “Israel” or “Israelis.” As Complainants and several witnesses credibly explained, Zionism is considered by many to be part of the ethnic identity of Jewish people, so a reasonable person could view [THEIR] posts critical of Zionism as targeting national origin, shared ancestry, and ethnic characteristics.

Venable determined that two posts, located at pages 13 and 20 of the Original Notice of Allegations dated April 23, 2025, are sufficient to create an intimidating, hostile, and offensive environment for Jewish students and faculty members because those posts reflect extreme, discriminatory themes. For example, Complainants and witnesses consider the post at page 20 to be “revolting” and said that it “spews hatred.” In addition, taken together, [THE RESPONDENT’S] posts reflect a repetitive series of incidents that, could be perceived by a reasonable person offensive and/or intimidating to Jewish people. Witnesses, even those who do not identify as Jewish, associated the posts with feelings of offense, fear, and anger.

Venable also determined that [THE RESPONDENT’S] leadership roles and campus responsibilities, in connection with [THEIR] social media posts, contribute to and exacerbate an intimidating, hostile, and offensive environment. As Complainants and multiple witnesses noted, [THE RESPONDENT] has “significant influence” as a campus leader, such as through positions with the BRT and SJP. Those positions serve to amplify [THEIR] voice on campus, and in turn increase the impact of [THEIR] posts on Adelphi’s Jewish community. If a reasonable Jewish student saw [THE RESPONDENT’S] social media posts, they may feel more offended or intimidated by them because they view [THEM], as Advisor to SJP and a Bias Response Team member, as having a say in how campus culture treats Jewish individuals.”

Appeals

The parties will have an opportunity to appeal the investigative findings now, on the bases outlined below, prior to the Interim Provost initiating the process outlined in Article XIX of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”). The fourth ground for appeal identified in the Policy, that “the sanction imposed is clearly not appropriate for the violation” is premature at this time, because the Interim Provost will determine whether discipline and sanctions are appropriate after the Policy’s appeal process is complete.

Parties have specific appeal rights regarding this determination and the parties must exercise those rights, should they choose to appeal, within three (3) business days of receiving this letter. Specifically, your deadline for an appeal submission is August 20, 2025. An appeal will be considered only if one of the following grounds are present:

1. A procedural error has occurred that would change the outcome. You must describe this error in your written appeal request. Minor or harmless deviations from the process will not invalidate the proceedings;

2. There is new evidence that would change the outcome and that was not reasonably available when the determination was made. A summary of the new evidence, why it was previously unavailable, and its potential impact must be included in your request for an appeal;

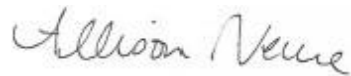
3. The investigator, or decision maker, had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants, respondents, or the individual complainant or respondent that would change the outcome.

After any received appeals are addressed, the Interim Provost, Dr. Susan Dinan, will determine whether sanctions and discipline are appropriate, in accordance with Article XIX of the CBA.

Prohibition Against Retaliation

This letter also serves as a reminder that the Adelphi University policy prohibits retaliation. Retaliation is “intentional action taken by an accused individual or allied third party, absent legitimate nondiscriminatory purposes, that harms or attempts to harm an individual as reprisal for filing a complaint, supporting a complainant or otherwise participating in a proceeding pursuant to this Policy”. Retaliation includes “intimidating, threatening, coercing or in any way discriminating against an individual because of the individual’s complaint or participation in an investigation or proceeding.” Adelphi University will not tolerate retaliation or individuals who encourage third parties to retaliate on their behalf. If you experience any retaliation, please contact Allison Vernace, Title IX Coordinator & Director of Equity and Compliance at 516-877-6808.

Sincerely,



Allison Vernace

Chief of Community Concerns & Resolution

Title IX Coordinator/Director of Equity & Compliance

CC: Rory Lancman, Advisor

Attached: Social Media Posts

Social media posts referenced in findings

Post from pg. 13:



Post from pg. 20:

