



JEWISH FACULTY  
AND STUDENTS

# CONVERSATION GUIDE

# WHO WE SHOULD ENGAGE (AND WHO WE SHOULDN'T)

Effectively leveraging our time, energy and communication

## 1 USING BINARIES?

If this person is using a binary framework that allows for empathy with Palestinians but **prevents them from empathizing with the Jewish people's trauma, and individual and collective rights**, and you should not engage.

## 2 INADVERTENT HARM?

If someone has empathy for both Jews & Palestinians but **leverages anti-Jewish ideas** in support of Palestinian justice, we should continue the conversation in order to address these harms.

## 3 FOCUSED CRITICISM?

If the person is limiting their criticism to Israeli political leaders or real government actions that harm Palestinians and **is not expressing ideas that undermine Jewish inclusion and safety**, share your genuine empathy for Palestinian suffering.



Don't  
engage.  
Wrong  
audience

Address  
the  
Issue

Empathize  
& move  
on

# Engagement Priorities

Be strategic with time  
& maximize impact

## WITH ADMINISTRATORS

### ACTIONS

- Share our **tailored antisemitism resource** with administrators, DEI professionals, student life staff, or any other staff responsible for fostering an inclusive environment on campus.
- Ask them to meet and discuss the ideas outlined in the guide.
- Work with them to implement the changes our community needs.

### REMEMBER

Addressing these challenges must be understood as a **long-term process**. Our goal is to ensure that administrators **prioritize** these **systemic changes**.

## WITH PEERS

### ACTIONS

- Working with your Jewish peers, and leveraging our audience framework and conversation guide above, identify a list of people to engage with one on one
- Focus on helping them understand the specific harmful narrative outlined above
- You can share our guide for your peers with them to help them better understand
- Ask people to help our community address this concern with the university

### REMEMBER

We're not necessarily trying to convince people who vehemently agree with the false and harmful narrative outlined in this guide. Our goal is to help the broader community understand how that story not only **undermines Jewish inclusion and safety**, but also how **antisemitism is connected to other bigotries** and serves as a fundamental threat to our democracy and movements for justice.

# METHODS FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

# Conversation Goals

Story of Them

Story of Self

Story of the Jewish People

Explaining Antisemitism

Clarify & Verify

Address Hard  
Questions

## FOLLOW THE ENGAGEMENT FUNNEL

The funnel is about building trust & empathy. The goal is to build relationships and establish trust by the sharing of our personal narratives through **Story of Them** & **Story of Self**. **Story of the Jewish People** and **Explaining Antisemitism** humanizes Jews and our concerns by fixing an often inaccurate perception of Jewish identity and antisemitism, including experiences on school grounds today.

## PRACTICE EMPATHY

**Demonstrate genuine empathy** for Palestinians and their experiences. Name & honor the real harm Palestinians are experiencing in this conflict.

## CLARIFY & VERIFY

**Don't assume** the intentions of others.

What does someone mean when they say, "Zionism," for example?" How we respond to a particular criticism will depend on answers to these and similar questions.

## REMEMBER THE GOAL

Your goal is to **slow the spread of harmful ideas**, not win a debate.

# ACTIVE OUTREACH GUIDING QUESTIONS

Using the funnel



## 01 Story of them

- How are you doing right now?
- How has 10/7 and the ensuing war personally impacted you?
- Are you personally connected to anyone in Israel or Gaza?
- How do you feel about the campus environment over the past year?

## 02 Story of self

- How has October 7 and the ensuing war personally impacted you?
- Do you feel campus has been welcoming to and protective of Jewish students and faculty?
- Have you personally experienced antisemitism since the war's outbreak?
- Have you had any experiences that made you feel alone or isolated, or that you couldn't show up fully as a Jewish person



# ACTIVE OUTREACH GUIDING QUESTIONS

## Using the funnel

### 03 Story of the Jewish People

- How have the events of 10/7 & the war activated the Jewish community's collective trauma?
- How does a history of systemic violence impact our sense of psychological & physical safety?
- How does our history of persecution inform our connection to and strong belief in Israel's existence as a homeland for the Jewish people?

**Emphasize** how labeling Jews as “white” erases the diversity of the Jewish people, particularly non-Ashkenazi Jews of color, and overlooks the fact that a majority of Israelis are descendants of Jews from the Middle East and North Africa.

**Explain** how referring to Jews/Israelis as colonizers or Israel as a “colonial” entity erases the Jewish peoples’ ancestral connection to the land and demonizes and dehumanizes Israelis and Jews who support them.

### 04 Explaining Antisemitism

- Jews should not be held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government
- Antisemitism is connected to other bigotries and serves as a fundamental threat to our democracy and movements for justice
- Portraying the state of Israel, the world's only Jewish state, and all who support its existence, as representations of evil feeds into the ancient antisemitic lie that Jews are responsible for, or are the prime example of, all the world's wrongs
- The problematic assumption that all Jews are white erases the existence and history of Jews of Color, and identifies Jewishness and whiteness (associated with power and oppression) as the prime co-evils that must be dismantled, which accelerates antisemitism by enabling false narratives to easily spread
- Jewish safety can and has changed rapidly regardless of skin color and status

**Note:** reference page 13 & 14 for a guide on explaining Jewish identity & antisemitism



METHODS FOR  
EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

# ENGAGEMENT FUNNEL

## OFFLINE

### Two Simple Rules

#### **Take everyone through the funnel**

When engaging someone on these issues for the first time, start at the top. In relationships when you've each previously shared your stories, you may still want to remind them

#### **Follow the funnel in every conversation**

While you don't need to spend too much time at the top of the funnel with someone you've engaged before, don't assume they remember the key ideas and context

## ONLINE

### A Little More Complicated

#### **With people you know, move online to offline**

Interpersonal dialogue is always better, though a public response is sometimes necessary

#### **Follow the funnel order, wherever you enter**

The "Story of the Jewish People" should always precede "Explaining Antisemitism"; etc.

#### **Your goal and audience are always the same**

Nurture empathy & slow down the ripple effect

# HAVING PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE

and speaking across differences

## 01 Disagree without debating

- **Name your concerns** about how violence against Jews is normalized when our community is isolated or targeted on campus.
- It is important that we **all advocate for Palestinians**, and that we do so in a way that honors the reality of the conflict and does not **accidentally perpetuate harm** against Jews.

## 02 Speak to the **impact** of their language and share your concerns

- Share the concerns that Jews have about the **real harm** language can cause.
- Ask them to **understand** the ways in which certain language can be used to **demonize** or **justify harm** to Jews

## 03 Ask for **nuance & empathy**

- Ask them to **differentiate** the actions of the Israeli government or military from the Israeli people.
- Name that **demonizing** or **attacking Jews** for the actions of the Israeli government is antisemitism and is unacceptable.
- Request that they **condemn antisemitism** and **recognize the harm** caused by the problematic language they use.
- Ask them to **empathize with the Jewish people**. Help them to understand that Jews are going to support both the Israeli and Palestinian people right now.





# BEFORE ENGAGING IN 1:1 CONVERSATIONS

## HAVE A PLAN

It's important to have a plan before you go into any sensitive conversation, especially in this moment.

In order to successfully use the information provided in the pages of this tool kit, we encourage you to use this checklist - along with the worksheets and conversation guides that follow - to engage in meaningful 1:1 conversations.

### 01 REFLECT

Use the **Story of Self** and **Story of The Jewish People** worksheets to reflect on the things you want to convey in each conversation.

### 02 PLAN

**Reflect on the conversation guide** that best represents the person you're meeting. Take note of things you want to say specifically to that person, based on what you know to be true right now.

### 03 ENGAGE

When possible, **meet in person**. If not, a virtual face-to-face conversation is best. Use the conversation guide to help you navigate the dialogue.

### 04 RESTORE

**Take time to process** your conversation, and replenish your mental and emotional energy.

### 05 FOLLOW UP

**Touch base** after the conversation in whatever ways make sense.

# OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

## 01 Show you care

Jewish faculty should check on their Jewish students to let them know you are there for them and you care about their safety, so they feel both safe and seen. Consider offering periodic “office hours” with Jewish students & their families.

## 02 Provide trusted reporting mechanisms

Students and faculty may be reluctant to report incidents out of fear of backlash, exacerbating the issue, or having their concerns be dismissed. Ask administrators to provide a trusted, confidential, and perhaps anonymous means by which students and faculty can safely report incidents.

## 03 Use Professional support

If you experienced a hate-related incident, speak to a trauma-informed school counselor or social worker.

## 04 Leverage affinity spaces

Though not all people process similarly, some Jewish students & faculty may find it preferable and safer to share their emotions with members of their own community. Create a Jewish student, Jewish faculty, or Jewish student-faculty collective that meets periodically to foster community & reinforce mutual support.

## 05 Organize together

You are not alone and you don’t need to do this work alone. In fact, you will be more impactful doing this intentionally, strategically, and with your peers

## 06 Learn on your own

Sharpen your own knowledge and conversational skills so you feel better equipped to handle sensitive interactions with your peers.

## 07 Engage Campus Jewish institutions

Seek guidance or support from trusted campus Jewish institutions.