

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

### ENSURE RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

*Students should feel fully supported in requesting academic accommodations for observances, not silenced for holding religious views.*

### PROMOTE CIVIL EXCHANGE ON ISRAEL

*Civil exchange concerning Israel and prevention of antisemitic incidents for American Jews must be a top priority.*

### VALUE JEWISH LEADERSHIP

*Formal Jewish organizations and their leaders must be recognized and included in conversations concerning Jews on campus.*

### SUPPORT COLLEGIATE ENVIRONMENTS OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

*Social exchanges among students are pivotal to Muslim appreciation. Without properly sourced spaces, such exchanges will not occur.*

### CREATE CURRICULAR SPACES FOR SUPPORT AND SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION

*Students should have spaces to interrogate perspectives and biases, and disrupt assumptions about the nature of Islamophobia.*

### PRIORITIZE STRUCTURAL CHANGES THAT FOREGROUND MUSLIM NEEDS

*Religious accommodations, prayer/meditation spaces, and support staff can create lasting changes in the experiences of Muslim students on campus.*



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



Interfaith  
Research

The research results and policy implications presented in this pamphlet come from the IDEALS project. The research team - which includes Dr. Ben Selznick at James Madison University and Musbah Shaheen at The Ohio State University - interviewed faculty, administrators, staff, and students as a means for unearthing the mechanisms needed to disrupt Islamophobia and Antisemitism in higher education.

Importantly, the IDEALS research team is comprised of scholars who identify as religiously diverse, including Atheist, Catholic, Druid Pagan, Evangelical Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Spiritualist with Buddhist and Hindi leanings.

[interfaithresearch.org](https://interfaithresearch.org) [@IndexInspires](https://twitter.com/IndexInspires)

## ANTISEMITISM & ISLAMOPHOBIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

### WHAT CAN POLICY DO AS RESISTANCE?

As cases of antisemitism and Islamophobia increase on college campuses, policymakers can respond with research-backed actions to ensure higher education environments are safe for Jews and Muslims.

Led by Drs. Matthew J. Mayhew and Alyssa Rockenbach, in partnership with Interfaith America, the research presented here is based on data collected from over 20,000 students enrolled at 122 institutions from 2015 to 2019.

# ANTISEMITISM & ISLAMOPHOBIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION: WHAT CAN POLICY DO AS RESISTANCE?

## ANTISEMITISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

As recognized at the State (e.g., Virginia) and federal levels, antisemitism is on the rise in the United States and colleges and not immune from this growing wave of hatred. Whether overt or subtle, perpetuated by peers or faculty, and/or affecting academic or social life, the presence of antisemitism creates hostile climates to Jewish collegians.

Actions against Jews often intentionally deny the complexities of Jewish identity. This includes a wide range of engagement with formal religious practices, a spectrum of perspectives about Israel, and diverse political viewpoints. It is with respect to these trends and perspectives that we share findings from our research in the hopes of catalyzing positive change.

## ISLAMOPHOBIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The meaning of what it means to be Muslim in America has evolved over the last two decades. Seismic events such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Boston Marathon bombing, Pulse nightclub shooting, and the Trump era have influenced public attitudes toward Muslims and subsequent policies and practices.

Muslim students are not monolithic. They represent a mosaic of identities and experiences that complicate how we perceive and address Islamophobia. What is considered Islamophobic for one Muslim may not be so for another. Islamophobia is both institutional and interpersonal. Therefore, the response to its effects should come at both levels.

## RESEARCH TAKEAWAYS



### CAMPUSES CAN WELCOME OR EXCLUDE

Encouraging accommodations and honoring the diversity of Jewish identities and traditions is vital to Jews and non-Jews alike.



### JEWISH APPRECIATION MUST CONSIDER GLOBAL CONTEXTS

Issues pertaining to Israel and Zionism affect Jews and campus climates when geopolitical critiques become antisemitic expressions.



### POLITICAL VIEWPOINTS AND DEVELOPMENT

Very conservative and conservative students develop greater appreciation toward Jews during college than their liberal and very peers.



### FORMAL JEWISH GROUPS ARE ESSENTIAL

Organizations such as Chabad on Campus and Hillel International elevate appreciative discourses and encourage student development.



### PEER EXCHANGES MATTER GREATLY

Students who have space for expression and support of their viewpoints build appreciation; those who experience negativity when exercising their views do not.



### COLLEGES SUCCEED IN COMBATting ISLAMOPHOBIA

Non-Muslim students leave college with more appreciation for Muslims compared to when they started, regardless of pre-college experiences.



### ISLAMOPHOBIA IS POLITICAL, YET SURMOUNTABLE

Conservative students come to college less appreciative toward Muslims but leave with more appreciation than their liberal peers.



### ISLAMOPHOBIA IS INTERSECTIONAL

Attitudes toward Muslims are intermingled with attitudes across gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and nationality.



### INFORMAL SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT ATTENUATES ISLAMOPHOBIC ATTITUDES

Students who have at least two social interactions across worldviews (regardless of identities) become more appreciative of Muslims.



### ACADEMIC SPACES HAVE UNDERUTILIZED POTENTIAL TO ADDRESS ISLAMOPHOBIA

Classrooms are not living up to their potential for productive exchanges across faith lines, to the detriment of the students' appreciation; those who experience negativity when exercising their views do not.