

LDB Praises Rejection of Charges Against Saint Louis Jewish Students

Washington, D.C., July 15, 2016: Today, the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (“LDB”) praises St. Louis University (“SLU”), for rejecting retaliatory charges brought against two Jewish students by an anti-Israel activist. LDB advised the students who faced these charges after filing an appropriate and legitimate bias complaint against another student. [LDB](#) is a national civil rights legal advocacy organization, best known for its work fighting anti-Semitism in higher education.

“Jewish students, and all students, on campus, must feel free to bring meritorious claims of bias on campus, without the fear of retaliation,” said [LDB President Kenneth L. Marcus](#). “For this reason, retaliation against students for raising claims of discrimination is actually a violation of [federal law](#). We commend the SLU administration for setting a good example for other university administrations nationwide.”

The following facts have been reported to the Louis D. Brandeis Center: earlier this year, two leaders of the SLU Jewish Student Association (“JSA”), filed a complaint with SLU’s Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards against an anti-Israel SLU student for his disruptive behavior during their April 4th event, “Israel: First Responders to World Crises.” In addition to laughing loudly and rudely during the presentation, asking off-topic questions during the Q&A, and disrupting the students when they attempted to answer, the anti-Israel student said, “Thank you, your Zionist fascism is on full display today” as he exited the room, and muttered, “they should all die” – a statement which, according to a witness, was directed at the two JSA event organizers. Following an investigation, this anti-Israel heckler was found responsible for disruptive conduct, and the incident was found to be a “bias incident” in line with SLU Policy. The date of SLU’s disciplinary determination was May 11, 2016.

One day following this determination, on May 12, and quite obviously in retribution, the two Jewish students received notice that the heckler had filed a bias charge against them, claiming racial discrimination, and that *he* was the victim of bias, on the grounds that he was the only black student at the event. This meritless complaint was backed by a letter to the school by Palestine Legal. Only after the school found that his conduct violated the school’s code of conduct did he change his story.

Aside from counseling the Jewish students, LDB and the Lawfare Project sent a letter to the SLU President and several other university officials, urging them to dismiss the meritless complaint brought by the heckler. The students attended a hearing on the charges against them in early June. Last week, the Office of Student Responsibility & Community Standards found that there was no basis to support a claim of bias in this case. The charges against the Jewish students have been dismissed.

The [Brandeis Center](#) recommends [Best Practices](#) for university administrators, to help prevent and address [anti-Semitism](#) on their campuses, and is pleased that SLU has done the right thing, and set a positive example for other university officials nationwide.

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About The Louis D. Brandeis Center: The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc., or LDB, is an independent, nonprofit organization established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. The Brandeis Center conducts research, education, and advocacy to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses. It 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. For more information, contact Aviva Vogelstein avogelst@brandeiscenter.com, or find us at [our website](#).