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Tufts joins list of campuses denouncing US scholarly group's boycott of Israeli academic institutions

Posted by Matt Rocheleau January 7, 2014 01:12 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff

Tufts University president Anthony P. Monaco is one of the latest local campus leaders to denounce the controversial decision by a US organization of scholars to boycott Israeli academic institutions.

“As an institution of higher education, Tufts University is deeply committed to the principles of academic freedom and educating students to be active global citizens,” Monaco said in a [statement](#). “Boycotting academic institutions in response to government policies would undermine the academic freedom of scholars around the world.”

In mid-December, the American Studies Association voted to boycott Israeli academic institutions saying it was a form of protest against Israel’s treatment of Palestinians.

Days later, the American Studies program at Brandeis University, a nonsectarian, Jewish-sponsored school in Waltham, [announced](#) it would cut ties with the scholarly association. Penn State University at Harrisburg also ended its relationship with the association.


And, [others have condemned](#) the scholarly association’s boycott, including [MIT president L. Rafael Reif](#), Boston University president Robert A. Brown, Harvard president Drew Faust, Yale president Peter Salovey, Wesleyan University President Michael S. Roth, former Harvard president Lawrence H. Summers and leaders of other campuses; the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Universities; and the Anti-Defamation League.


The American Studies Association’s decision to boycott Israeli academic institutions came after the Association for Asian American Studies became the first US scholarly institution to do so in the spring. The Native American and Indigenous Studies Association also decided to join the boycott this month.

The boycott serves “as an ethical stance, a form of material and symbolic action,” said a recent statement from the ASA. “It represents a principle of solidarity with scholars and students deprived of their academic freedom and an aspiration to enlarge that freedom for all, including Palestinians.”

The association has said a boycott is “warranted given U.S. military and other support for Israel; Israel’s violation of international law and UN resolutions; the documented

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impact of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian scholars and students; the extent to which Israeli institutions of higher education are a party to state policies that violate human rights; and the support of such a resolution by many members of the ASA.”

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus](#) pages.

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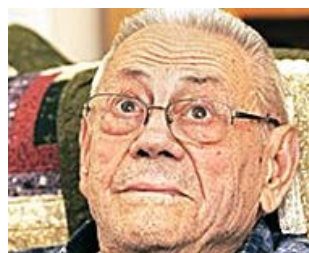
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