

## **BDS on American College Campuses: 2014-15 Year-In-Review**

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There was an increase in anti-Israel activity on American college campuses during the latest academic year with students actively working to promote Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel. Student groups that are well-known for their efforts to isolate the Jewish state advocated for a variety of BDS-related initiatives in an effort to push forward their agenda and punish Israel.

The most prevalent BDS initiative on campus involved the introduction of divestment resolutions and referenda by various anti-Israel student groups. Nineteen campuses held votes on such resolutions or referenda in the 2014-15 academic year. Although none of the resolutions or referenda are binding or are likely to alter university policy, support for these initiatives in some cases created a divisive atmosphere on campus.

While weeklong programs like “Israeli Apartheid Week” and “Palestine Awareness Week” continued to wane in popularity among anti-Israel students over the past year – as indicated by fewer schools participating and less general buzz around these programs – there was a significant increase in anti-Israel events overall.

520 explicitly anti-Israel events and programs took place nationwide on college campuses, representing a 30% increase from the previous academic year. Well over 50% of these events focused various aspects of the BDS movement.

Below is an alphabetically organized list of the universities that considered divestment resolutions or referendums this year, including the results of these votes:

1. **Bowdoin College:** A BDS referendum was voted down at Bowdoin College where 85% of the total student body reportedly voted. 71% were opposed to the referendum and 14% voted in favor of it.
2. **DePaul University:** A BDS referendum was passed at DePaul University during the 2013-14 academic year, but their request was denied by the DePaul University Fair Business Practices Committee in January 2015.
3. **Earlham College:** A BDS resolution was reportedly endorsed by the Student Senate at Earlham College on Tuesday, April 21, 2015.
4. **Loyola University:** A BDS resolution was passed by the student government at Loyola University on Tuesday, March 24, 2015. The final vote was 16-15-2.
5. **Marquette University:** A resolution titled "Recommendation #1 Socially Responsible Investment" was passed at Marquette University on April 28, 2015 with a vote of 25-3-0. The resolution did not mention the word 'divestment' or name specific corporations that are allegedly responsible for Palestinian human rights violations.
6. **Northeastern University:** A BDS resolution was voted down by the Student Senate at Northeastern University with a 25-9 vote.
7. **Northwestern University:** The Northwestern student government passed a BDS resolution on Wednesday, February 18, 2015. The vote was 24-22-3.
8. **Oglethorpe University:** The Student Government Association (SGA) at Oglethorpe University reportedly passed a BDS resolution submitted by Students for Justice in Palestine on Friday, May 1, 2015.
9. **Princeton University:** A BDS referendum at Princeton University was voted down with 965 (47.5%) for divestment and 1,067 (52.5%) against divestment.

10. **San Diego State University (SDSU):** A BDS referendum proposed by SJP failed at SDSU. The vote count was 1701-1500 and SJP did not gain the 2/3 majority that they needed in order to pass it.
11. **Stanford University:** The Undergraduate Senate of Stanford University voted 10-4-1 to pass a BDS resolution submitted by the student group Stanford Out of Occupied Palestine on Tuesday, February 17, 2015.
12. **University of California-Davis (UC Davis):** The UC Davis Student Senate passed a divestment resolution that was submitted by the Students for Justice in Palestine chapter on Thursday, January 29, 2015. The vote on the resolution was 8-2-2, but it was challenged and overturned by the student-led Court of Associated Students.
13. **University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA):** "A Resolution to Divest from Corporations Engaged in Violence against Palestinians" was passed by the UCLA student government. The resolution, which was reportedly sponsored by 15 student organizations and endorsed by another 17, was passed by an 8-2-2 margin on November 18, 2014.
14. **University of California-Santa Barbara (UCSB):** A vote on a BDS resolution took place on April 22, 2015 at UC Santa Barbara. The result of the vote was 12-12-1 and the Internal Vice President Angela Lau broke the tie by voting no against the resolution.
15. **University of California Student Workers Union (UAW 2865):** The University of California Student Workers Union (UAW 2865) endorsed a divestment resolution on Thursday, December 4, 2014 calling on the UC Board of Regents to divest from companies that are allegedly profiting from or aiding in the Israeli occupation. The resolution also called for an end of U.S. aid to Israel and for UAW International to divest from the same corporations. The vote was 1411-749.
16. **University of Michigan:** A BDS resolution failed to pass at the University of Michigan after the Central Student Government voted 15-25 against

endorsing the resolution which was presented by SAFE on April 3, 2015.

17. **University of New Mexico:** A BDS resolution at the University of New Mexico failed to pass with a vote of 4-14-2 on Wednesday, April 22, 2015.
18. **University of Texas-Austin:** A BDS resolution was voted down at UT-Austin with a vote count of 11-23 on April 22, 2015.
19. **University of Toledo:** A BDS resolution was passed by the student government at University of Toledo with a 21-4 vote on Tuesday, March 3, 2015. The same resolution had previously been ruled unconstitutional on Tuesday, February 17.

### **ADL's Efforts to Counter BDS**

- Since September 2014, ADL has been running a program called Words to Action: Empowering Jewish Students to Address Bias on Campus, which is an interactive education program for college and pre-college students that is designed to empower and equip them with constructive and effective responses to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on campus;
- ADL launched a new Twitter account ([@CampusADL](#)) to directly engage with Jewish and pro-Israel groups and students on college and university campuses throughout the country. Through this account, ADL has provided students with ADL's perspectives, backgrounders, and other resources to help them address anti-Israel activity, as well as to alert them about upcoming events and campaigns;
- ADL trained students on how to lobby against divestment and present a pro-Israel viewpoint. ADL also provided students with factsheets, research and talking points about the BDS movement;
- ADL encouraged university chancellors and administrators to speak out against divestment resolutions and assert that the campus in question will not entertain divestment;

- ADL issued public statements condemning divestment resolutions that had passed and praising university leaders for speaking out against them;
- ADL advised high-level university administrators about proactive measures to create a safe and comfortable campus environment for all students, reminding them that Jewish and pro-Israel students can feel isolated or intimidated by extreme.