



January 17, 2022

VIA EMAIL

Dr. Jason Wingard, President
Temple University
Second Floor, Sullivan Hall
1330 Polett Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Dear President Wingard:

We were horrified to learn about the antisemitic harassment and intimidation that a Jewish student has been enduring since the start of her freshman year at Temple University. Equally horrifying was Temple's delayed and ineffective response, in violation of the University's obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

According to the detailed [account](#) she gave to the *Forward*, Amy Westrick was targeted based on her Jewish identity by her roommate from the very start of their freshman year together. Both of them were recruits to Temple's rowing team.

The roommate made comments about Ms. Westrick's religious observance. Feeding an offensive antisemitic stereotype, she once asked Ms. Westrick for money because, she said, she thought Jews had a lot of money. After the High Holidays, the roommate sent Ms. Westrick a text that included a photo of herself with the words "I hate Jews" across the bottom.

Instead of promptly responding to the antisemitism and taking steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment and prevent it from recurring, as required by Title VI, Temple did the opposite. Ms. Westrick reported the text to one of her rowing coaches, but the coach reportedly did not seem upset about the text and did not take any steps to protect Ms. Westrick. Instead of supporting Ms. Westrick and distancing themselves from the antisemite and her conduct, Ms. Westrick's teammates reportedly spurned her and some joined in to harass her.

When Ms. Westrick asked to change her dorm room so that she no longer lived with her harasser, Temple did not respond immediately to that reasonable request. She – not her antisemitic bully – eventually was moved to a different room, but it was not only in the same dorm but also on the same floor as the bully, effectively forcing Ms. Westrick to continue to have contact with her harasser. When Ms. Westrick had to return to her former dorm room to retrieve some of her belongings, her roommates advised her that she should not be there, based on no-contact orders they had filed with the Temple police – orders that were unjustified since Ms. Westrick had done absolutely nothing wrong.

When Temple finally conducted a formal investigation of the antisemitic harassment that Ms. Westrick endured, her harasser was permitted to have supporters at the hearing. Ms. Westrick was not. Reportedly, the roommate did not deny that she had repeatedly harassed Ms. Westrick based on her Jewish identity. She simply claimed that she had been joking and was sorry.

It is not clear that the harasser was ever punished for her actions. She may have had to take a class on diversity and tolerance.

This is hardly enough. More is required. Consistent with Temple University's obligations under Title VI, we urge you to take the following steps:

- Issue a message to the Temple community, describing the antisemitism that occurred, and forcefully and unequivocally condemning it, as well as everyone who participated in it, looked the other way, and failed to effectively address it. This includes but is not limited to Ms. Westrick's roommate, other students who spurned and harassed Ms. Westrick, the rowing coach who took no action, and the residential staff who failed to ensure that Ms. Westrick no longer had to live with her bully and the bully's allies.
- In your message, make it clear that Temple has zero tolerance for antisemitism and that all perpetrators of antisemitic harassment and intimidation will be held accountable and punished.
- Given the multiple incidents of harassment, the perpetrator should be expelled. At the very least, the bully should be suspended from school and also from the rowing team. In addition, the bully should be compelled to complete a course about antisemitism in all its forms, including the history of antisemitism and its dangers. However long it was, a class on diversity and tolerance is insufficient.
- Ensure that all students, faculty and staff receive mandatory training about antisemitism in all its forms, using the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\) working definition of antisemitism](#) as a guide. We note that Temple has committed to a number of [initiatives](#) to combat racism against people of color, sex discrimination, and discrimination against disabled people. There is no initiative to combat racism against Jews, even though assault, harassment and vandalism against Jews have been and remain at [near-historic levels in the U.S.](#), with last Saturday's terrorist attack on Jews praying in a Texas synagogue the latest frightening example. Had training about antisemitism been provided to students, faculty and staff, then it is more likely than not that the rowing coach, residential life staff and other university officials would have addressed Ms. Westrick's harassment promptly and effectively.
- Issue an apology to Ms. Westrick and provide her with all the support she needs as a result of the harassment and intimidation she endured. It is no surprise to learn that Ms. Westrick is suffering from insomnia and depression. She was not only subjected to antisemitic harassment but her school failed to protect her.

What a stain on Temple University's reputation that a talented Jewish student has decided to transfer to another school because in her experience, Temple is neither safe nor welcoming to Jews. Please do not allow this stain to stand and grow. Make amends to this student and ensure that her experience is never replicated.

We look forward to hearing from you about how Temple intends to meet its legal and moral obligations to Ms. Westrick and other Jewish students. We are here to help in any way.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Morton A. Klein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Morton A. Klein
National President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan B. Tuchman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Susan B. Tuchman, Esq.
Director, Center for Law and Justice