

**Statement on NYU’s Department of Social and Cultural Analysis  
“Pledge of Non-Cooperation with Study Abroad Program in Israel”**

**Faculty Committee on NYU’s Global Network**

**July 2019**

The [“Statement About Pledge of Non-Cooperation With Study Abroad Program in Israel”](#) by NYU’s [Department of Social and Cultural Analysis](#) endorsed at the last department’s meeting of AY 2018/19 has generated a campus-wide debate and garnered a great deal of national and international media attention.<sup>1</sup> It has triggered an [institutional statement](#) from the university as well as a [petition](#) in opposition to the resolution.

The committee discussed this matter in its regular meeting on May 7, 2019 and during an additional meeting with three of the signatories of the department’s statement on May 16, 2019 to gather respective information.

As a faculty committee charged “to assess the academic state of NYU’s global network (the 11 global sites plus portal campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai) and make recommendations to the President and Provost for improvements, including recommendations for how best to integrate the global centers with schools and programs in New York and one another”<sup>2</sup>, the committee would like to make the following statement:

While recognizing the right of any individual faculty or student to participate or not participate in NYU’s global infrastructure, the committee would like to register its unequivocal solidarity with and full support of its colleagues at NYU Tel Aviv. It categorically rejects any call for non-cooperation among colleagues within the university’s own academic community and is concerned about the negative atmospheric repercussions such a proclamation has on students, faculty, and our community at-large.

As the committee already expressed in 2017, it continues to feel very strongly that “the faculty across the global network, whether in the three portals or the eleven sites, are all colleagues and should be involved in conversations about them”.<sup>3</sup> With regard to the current situation, the committee expresses its profound disappointment that NYU’s Department of Social and Cultural Analysis did not, to the committee’s knowledge, communicate with its colleagues at NYU Tel Aviv prior to issuing its statement. The community at NYU Tel Aviv is, to the committee’s knowledge, deeply committed to open and critical debate about the very issues that prompted

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Jenni Fink, [“NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis Ends Official Relationship With Tel Aviv Campus,”](#) Newsweek (May 2, 2019); Jenni Fink, [“Petition Opposing NYU Department’s Decision to End Relationship with Tel Aviv Campus Gathers Nearly 3,000 Signatures,”](#) (May 6, 2019); Meghna Maharishi and Victor Porcelli, [“Over 2,000 People Sign Petition Against Boycott of NYU Tel Aviv,”](#) Washington Square News (May 6, 2019); Shiri Moshe, [“NYU Tel Aviv Students Slam Department Over Boycott, Amid Criticism by Faculty, Administration,”](#) the algemeiner (May 17, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nyu.edu/about/university-initiatives/faculty-advisory-committee-on-nyus-global-network.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

the resolution of non-cooperation, including the Law of Entry. The committee therefore sincerely hopes that conversations across the portals will occur moving forward either via bilateral dialogue or the committee's Global Faculty Forum in the spirit of collegial solidarity.

The committee would also like to reiterate its opposition to any government policies curtailing the free exchange of ideas and mobility among academics, regardless of their national origins, including but not limited to the Law of Entry.<sup>4</sup>

However, the committee also maintains that no member of the NYU community can be held responsible for government actions that are beyond any individual's control. It therefore urges the respective administrative offices at NYU to intervene on behalf of community members and do all it can to advocate on behalf of individual community members or groups within NYU should any actual or potential restrictions in terms of mobility, access, or academic freedom emerge.

Following the cases of two NYU faculty members' unsuccessful attempts to gain entry to the UAE after being invited to teach at NYU Abu Dhabi, the committee in December 2017 asked the university leadership

“to publicly and unequivocally reaffirm its commitment to the global mobility and academic freedom of all of its members across the various portals and sites as one of the fundamental principles of its concept of the university's global network and engagement, as well as international scholarly collaboration, learning, and advancement of knowledge.”<sup>5</sup>

The committee urges the administration to continue to maintain clear and transparent protocols for access to NYU's global infrastructure and to address the structural inequities with regard to international mobility through clear and timely communication and administrative appeal processes on behalf of all members of NYU's community.

In the context of the most recent discussion, the committee affirms these sentiments and presses the administration to make sure that the application of university policies, including the NYU Faculty Handbook, is upheld “in operations and activities of the University regardless of location” and that all members of the NYU community are protected by the values and principles reflected in these policies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The committee supports NYU President Hamilton's concerns expressed to the Israeli authorities in that regard. See Minutes, NYU University Senate, April 26, 2018, page 6 (<https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/univSenate/documents/2018-04-26-Senate-Minutes.PDF>).

<sup>5</sup> Faculty Committee on NYU's Global Network, “Statement on Mobility,” page 3. ([https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/provost/documents/faculty-global-network/12.20.17\\_Statement\\_Mobility\\_NYUs\\_Global\\_Network.pdf](https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/provost/documents/faculty-global-network/12.20.17_Statement_Mobility_NYUs_Global_Network.pdf))

<sup>6</sup> NYU Faculty Handbook, “Application Outside of the United States,” <https://www.nyu.edu/faculty/governance-policies-and-procedures/faculty-handbook/introduction/application-outside-of-the-united-states.html>

At the same time, as it also articulated in December 2017, “the committee rejects any efforts to sever ties among the portals, seeing such moves as not only counter-productive, but needlessly punitive to faculty and students at the respective portal. The university’s global network is no longer simply an idea; it is an established fact of life at our university. We are all NYU.”<sup>7</sup>

Despite the challenges and complexities of the global network, the committee believes that the development of the university’s global infrastructure is a promising way to overcome an internationalist approach to higher education and move towards a truly generative global form of knowledge production that potentially enables us to reconceptualize the university in the 21st century as a more diverse, inclusive and equitable place.

### **The Faculty Committee on NYU’s Global Network**

Co-Chairs: Eliot Borenstein, FAS and Martin Klimke, NYU Abu Dhabi

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Awam Amkpa, Tisch School of the Arts

Sylvain Cappell, Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences (Mathematics); Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Senators Council

Alexander Geppert, NYU Shanghai

Nicolas Graf, School of Professional Studies

Christian Haefke, NYU Abu Dhabi

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Heather Lee, Assistant Professor, NYU Shanghai

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Carol Sternhell, FAS (Journalism)

Deepak Unnikrishnan, Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (NYU Abu Dhabi)

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<sup>7</sup> Faculty Committee on NYU’s Global Network, “Statement on Mobility,” page 2.

Peter Voltz, Tandon School of Engineering  
Paul Wachtel, Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (Stern)  
Joseph Weiler, School of Law