

May 14, 2018

Dear Ms. Rosmarin and Ms. Josephs,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with the Board of Trustees about the student performance that Eli witnessed in class. We take any issues or concerns of discrimination and harassment very seriously, and President Monaco had already brought the incident to my attention. I chose to elevate this to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Board. I've now had a chance to review the issue with my colleagues and, more importantly, the administration's response. We understand how this performance—especially the desecration of a reproduction of the Israeli flag—was both offensive and troubling to Eli and others.

The Office of Equal Opportunity has a formal mandate to investigate complaints of discrimination and harassment on behalf of the university. While OEO determined that the class performance was essentially political in nature, and focused against the Birthright Israel program, the administration is committed to following up on Eli's concerns in the context of our commitment to fostering a healthy campus climate. President Monaco asked the university's Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Robert Mack, to reach out to Eli to determine appropriate next steps, to bring to light how this classroom experience was disturbing to Eli and to others, and ultimately to learn from it. I understand that Dr. Mack and Eli have had a productive initial meeting and discussed a number of possible next steps in the spirit of education. Dr. Mack will be following up with the professor, the student performer, and others in the class to provide an opportunity for facilitated discussion of the complex issues that Eli has raised.

Tufts' goal as an educational institution is to foster sensitivity, nuance, and understanding. And while we cannot mandate these qualities, we strive to encourage them in both the academic and the cocurricular arenas. President Monaco and his colleagues are committed to this effort, through both the university-wide Bridging Differences initiative and a range of programs within the schools and the campus community.

Building thoughtful, substantive engagement around issues in the Middle East is a challenge on university campuses nationwide. There already are many examples of positive, constructive dialogue at Tufts, and we are fortunate to have a vibrant Jewish community on campus, anchored by an active, nationally recognized Tufts Hillel. At the same time, we acknowledge that it is a university-wide responsibility to foster improved understanding and engagement across divergent perspectives. Tufts is committed to learning from Eli's experience to amplify and further refine its efforts in these areas.

Thank you again for your letter. We appreciate your demonstrated commitment to the wellbeing of our students and the Tufts community.

Sincerely,

Peter R. Dolan
Chairman
Board of Trustees
Tufts University