

Statement on WUD Society & Politics program Tuesday Oct 24, 2023

Hillel encourages our students to be curious and to be consistently educating themselves by asking questions and engaging in respectful and informed discussions with each other and with our neighbors in the community in which we live, especially regarding complex subjects during challenging times. This is the context in which we find ourselves compelled to raise concern about the WUD Society & Politics program today on the Israel-Hamas conflict.

We understand that there are significant differences of opinion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how to achieve the right path to a two-state solution which requires a healthy exchange of ideas from both sides. However, that important dialogue is distinctly separate from Hamas' shocking terrorist attack during which they beheaded, shot, burned, and tortured civilian women, babies, children, and other residents in unspeakable ways, leading to over 1300+ deaths, and the most Jews killed in one day since the Holocaust -- which is something very different.

Words and impressions matter during these sensitive times which is why the title of this event Sifting and Winnowing: Exploring the History of Israel and Gaza completely ignores and disregards the horrific 9/11 like attack on Israelis and citizens of over 20 countries and diminishes the impact of this horrific attack and the taking of over 200 hostages.

The event title fails to recognize the horrific attack on 10/7/23 as it lacks sensitivity and depth, failing to honor the civilian lives lost, demeans their memory and the gravity of this barbarity.

Inadequate academic and intellectual leadership

The title and choice of speaker does not seem to meet the high standards of intellectual rigor and informed discourse that such a complex topic demands. The speaker possesses a tendentious one-sided viewpoint on social media, from which we can gauge that this talk will lack the necessary complexity to address the horrific attack and war.

Raising the Bar

We hope that WUD Society for Politics will recognize that the selection of the topic and speaker at this time is insufficient to provide serious pursuit of complex issues. We hope that in the future WUD SOC & POL will pursue a higher level of exploration and curiosity when selecting speakers.