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September 8, 2024

Dear Board of Governors in the State of Florida University Systems:

We are writing as the Executive Committee of the Association for Jewish Studies, the world's largest professional society for Jewish Studies, regarding the decision by the Board of Governors in the State of Florida University Systems (Aug 2) to screen and review all courses and textbook materials for antisemitism and anti-Israel bias.

We are concerned that the approach of screening course titles and syllabi for keywords such as Jew, Jewish, Judaism, Israel, Israeli, Palestine, and Palestinian, disproportionately singles out faculty in Jewish Studies and other cognate fields and subjects them, and their courses, to a disproportionate level of surveillance. As such, this policy not only violates academic freedom for people in Jewish Studies, it also has a disparate impact on faculty teaching in Jewish Studies and related fields and places an undue burden on them, which may have negative consequences for the continued offering of their courses. As such, we urge the Board of Governors to reconsider its policy.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Laura Leibman, President, Association for Jewish Studies.  
Helen Kim, VP of Program, Association for Jewish Studies  
Laura Lieber, VP of Publications, Association for Jewish Studies  
Hartley Lachter, VP of Membership and Outreach, Association for Jewish Studies  
Lila Corwin Berman, Secretary/Treasurer, Association for Jewish Studies  
Robin Judd, Past President, Association for Jewish Studies