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Media Contact: aen@berlinrosen.com

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND YALE DOCUMENTARY PRODUCED BY IRANIAN AMERICAN ROYA HAKAKIAN EXPOSES HYPOCRISY OF BOYCOTTING ISRAELI ACADEMIA – WHERE COEXISTENCE IS PRACTICED DAILY

Israeli scholars face canceled collaborations, rejected publications, exclusion from professional groups, and restricted access to global research networks

WASHINGTON, DC (March 26, 2026) – Yale University faculty just debuted a groundbreaking short documentary, *Indivisible: The Israeli Academy after October 7th*, as first [reported in eJewishPhilanthropy](#). Drawing on firsthand accounts and data, the documentary exposes how efforts to isolate Israeli academics target the very institutions where Jews and Arabs study, teach and work side by side.

The documentary, which recently premiered at Yale’s esteemed Buckley Institute before Buckley student fellows, is available free of charge for educators, students and the public, offering an unfiltered look at the coexistence, resilience and intellectual exchange that define Israeli academic and medical institutions. The film is directed by acclaimed author and filmmaker Roya Hakakian ([Journey from the Land of No](#)); Yale professor [Evan D. Morris](#) served as executive producer; the [Academic Engagement Network](#) (AEN) provided significant funding. Today, AEN, also launched a website for the documentary and accompanying resources.

At the center of the film is a stark tension: while Israeli universities and hospitals function as some of the most integrated institutions in the Middle East, they have become primary targets of the global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and punishing academic boycotts.

The documentary highlights some key demographic data:

- In 2024, Arabs comprised 19.5% of undergraduate students and 16.5% of all graduate students at Israeli universities.
- In 2024, Arab Israelis earned 22% of bachelor’s degrees and 16.3% of master’s degrees, figures that closely track with their share of the national population (approximately 20%).
- Arab Israelis make up 17% of doctors, 24% of nurses, and 48% of all pharmacists.

The film presents universities and hospitals as spaces where sustained, institutionalized coexistence is not aspirational, but operational. The hypocrisy of BDS is made clear throughout the documentary as a range of professionals – professors, doctors, students, deans, and university presidents of diverse faiths – emphasize how Israeli academic and medical institutions are models of coexistence. Arab students and faculty are meaningfully represented and supported.

“I’m an Arab from Israel. Our mission is to have students, faculty, and administrative staff from different backgrounds - present their narratives,” said Mona Houry, Vice President for Strategy and Diversity at Hebrew University. “I see our success as letting people listen and understand that there [are] different narratives [than] the one[s] we grew up on.”

“I belong to the Arab Druze community, which is a small minority in Israel. Israel is my home. I was born here. My parents were born here and also my grandparents. I feel first class here,” said Sameh Daher, an oncologist at Rambam Medical Center.

“This is a society where Arabs are represented proportionally within the university and university faculty,” said Jonathan Kaplan, former Vice Provost at Hebrew University’s Rothberg International School. “There is attentiveness, understanding, and hope for the future. If there is one element in Israeli society that should be preserved and strengthened, it should be the universities. This is where we listen to each other.”

“I’m a left-wing supporter and I [have] always [been] for Palestinian rights,” said Michal Bar-Asher Siegal, Vice President for Global Engagement at Ben Gurion University. “But the fact that in the aftermath of October 7, the support for Palestinian rights translated to support of Hamas was a shock to me.”

“As soon as people start picking and choosing whom to review or support, the whole scientific edifice collapses,” Evan D. Morris, executive producer of the film and professor of radiology and biomedical imaging at Yale, and longtime AEN faculty member, warned. “And sadly, the closest parallel I can think of to these boycotts is the Nazi period, when all the professions seized the opportunity to exclude Jews.”

The documentary is rooted in a 2024 delegation, facilitated with the help of AEN, of 25 Yale academics who traveled to Israel to hear directly from their counterparts across universities and medical centers. What they encountered, across classrooms, laboratories, and hospital wards, was a system defined by daily cooperation across lines of identity, even in the direct aftermath of October 7.

“Israeli academic institutions, scholars, and medical researchers have faced documented boycotts and restrictions, including severed institutional partnerships, canceled conference participation, rejected journal submissions, and reduced access to research funding. They have been removed from international collaborations and subjected to blatant discrimination in peer review, hiring, and promotion, resulting in measurable professional and institutional harm,” said Academic Engagement Network Executive Director Miriam Elman. “This is not only wrong and antithetical to academia’s mission, it is a sorely misdirected punishment of those actually fighting for peace and coexistence.”

In 2021, the Academic Engagement Network provided the seed-funding for [Antisemitism in Our Midst](#), a documentary produced by UC Berkeley faculty and Jewish educators. The film is an 11-minute animated explainer designed to educate students and staff about Jewish history, the roots of antisemitism and how to discuss Israel thoughtfully without resorting to harmful stereotypes.

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AEN is a national organization that mobilizes networks of university faculty and administrators to counter antisemitism, oppose the denigration of Jewish and Zionist identities, promote academic freedom, and advance education about Israel. More at <https://academicengagement.org/> and <https://www.facultyagainstantisemitism.org/>.