

*Email written to The University of Tampa's Dean of Students and Director of Campus Safety on Tuesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.*

Subject: Pittsburgh: UT's Failure to Respond

It is with great disappointment that I am writing this email today. After the recent tragedy in Pittsburgh at the Tree of Life Synagogue, I have seen much of the nation respond quickly and gracefully with love and support to not only the Jewish community but America as a whole. Yet, no one from the University of Tampa community has made any remarks.

I fully understand and acknowledge that to some, this is "just another mass shooting" and if you respond to one, then you would need to respond to all of them, but, this is far from the truth. This is not just another mass shooting; this is the deadliest anti-Semitic attack in US history.

It is a core value of the Jewish faith to take action against hate crimes targeted against not only the Jewish faith but peoples of all backgrounds instead of being a bystander; all people are to be respected and feel safe, especially in their places of worship. I grew up in an interfaith family and I recognize the need for not just tolerance, but respect to other religions. On college campuses, this is even more important to address. As many of us young adults are developing our individual beliefs, it is important for our faculty and staff to make clear what the values of UT are.

While you may consider this a stretch, I recall an email being sent to the UT community after the 2017 "Muslim Travel Ban" expressing solidarity and support and offering resources to those who needed it the most. The same should be done now. I am disappointed to see that there has not been one mention of solidarity or support from staff, or a mention from Campus Safety about the protection of ALL students regardless of their religion. While it may seem obvious to some that UT is well protected, it should be explicitly stated in a time like this.

As Elie Wiesel once said "We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented." Now, in the current state of America, with nearly a 60% increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes since 2016, it is more crucial than ever to make clear the position of UT regarding the discrimination of Jews, Muslims, and any student or UT community member of a minority faith/identity.

I strongly encourage you to consider sending an email to the UT community condemning these attacks, expressing support and solidarity to the Jewish community, offering resources, and ensuring the protection of ALL students (particularly during any religious events they may hold on campus).

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. Please feel free to reach out to me via cell or email if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Juliette Poulin  
University of Tampa Class of 2021