

## Fostering an Inclusive Community

Yeshiva University is wholly committed to and guided by Halacha and Torah values. These direct our every effort in establishing a caring campus community that is supportive of all its members.

To that end, a team of administrators, psychologists and rabbanim spent four months meeting with individual students and alumni representing diverse constituencies, student leaders, Roshei Yeshiva, inclusion experts and members of other faith-based organizations before the Coronavirus paused their activities. Through these conversations, we have gained perspective, awareness and sensitivity to the unique experiences of diverse groups within Yeshiva University and the Orthodox community, and fully appreciate the importance of understanding, inclusion and acceptance of all students.

Today, we are announcing concrete additional steps to ensure that our undergraduate campus environments continue to be supportive of all our students, with the goal of fostering an inclusive community of belonging. While this will be part of a larger, ongoing, campus-wide effort to identify educational and support programs for all those who feel marginalized, our initial initiatives will focus on increased support for our students who have raised concerns regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

As such, we will be taking the following steps to further enhance our efforts related to the request for additional support, services and a club including:

- Yeshiva University has long-standing policies that prohibit any form of harassment or discrimination against students on the basis of protected classifications, including race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity. We reaffirm our current policies that prohibit any form of harassment or discrimination against students on the basis of protected classifications.
- We will be updating our diversity, inclusion and sensitivity training to be focused on our diverse student groups, including sexual orientation and gender identity. An initial training for administrators will take place within the coming semester. Following this, we will develop training for faculty, staff and students.
- Yeshiva University's distinguished Counseling Center will continue to address all our students' needs. It will enhance its services by ensuring that there is a clinician on staff with specific LGBTQ+ experience.
- Within the coming semester, the University will appoint a point person to oversee a Warm Line that will be available for any member of the Yeshiva University community who would like to discuss and/or report any concerns pertaining to non-inclusive behavior, such as harassment, bullying or inappropriate comments.
- The message of Torah on this issue is nuanced, both accepting each individual with love and affirming its timeless prescriptions. While students will of course socialize in gatherings they see fit, forming a new club as requested under the auspices of YU will cloud this nuanced message.
- In order to continue to explore ways of bringing about greater awareness and acceptance, our next step will be to create a space for students, faculty and Roshei Yeshiva to continue this conversation. The insights of these conversations will then help guide educational platforms that will nurture a more compassionate, textured and understanding community in the years to come.

We are very thankful to everyone who participated in helping form these initiatives. We have been deeply touched by the frankness and openness of all of the conversations that have been a part of this process. It has been inspirational to see how the YU community is committed to Torah and committed to each other, and this gives us great optimism that we can all work together—students, student leaders, faculty and Roshei Yeshiva—to further enhance our Yeshiva's undergraduate culture of belonging.

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