

Dear WGSS and larger KU Community,

To borrow the words of Ibram X. Kendi, the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department faculty, “stand in solidarity with all Israelis and Palestinians who are grieving the loss of their loved ones, who are grieving the destruction of the homes and neighborhoods—who are grieving as they lay in the presence of extreme uncertainty, as they stare off into a past and a future of incessant war, gruesome violence, and power creating and manipulating fear and hate to expand power.” We want to focus on emotional support, educational resources, and action as we address the ongoing war in Gaza. We would like to center and amplify the voices of those impacted the most by current events. For our students and colleagues seeking support and additional information in this time when tensions are high and violence percolates at home and abroad, we have created a list below. As we engage in this long-suffering crisis and struggle for justice, we demand the preservation of free speech, especially when truths are complex and implicate us in the unfolding tragedy. While we watch the humanitarian catastrophe abroad, we see our students here at home experience fear and the threat of real violence for speaking out or for simply being a member of the Jewish or Muslim communities. We call for a cease-fire on all accounts. We call for listening, learning, and supporting each other.

We invite students in need to find support in CAPS, the office of DEIB, student groups, and in our offices and classrooms. We are here for all of you, particularly those of you who feel marginalized, targeted, or frightened by world events. We are here to foster education and dialogue with the goal of creating a more just world. Additionally, here are some other resources we’ve found helpful:

- [Palestinian Feminist Toolkit](#)
- [Jewish Voice for Peace](#)
- [Palestine Legal](#)
- [Teaching Palestine resources from the University of Illinois Chicago Critical Asian Studies](#)
- BDS: [Boycott, Divest, Sanctions](#). There is an [online teach-in on BDS hosted by Haymarket books](#) if you would like to learn more.
- [Al Jazeera: Middle East-based news network](#)
- [Jadaliyya: an independent ezine produced by the Arab Studies Institute](#)
- [Gabriel Winant, “On Mourning and Statehood: A Response To Joshua Leifer,” Dissent magazine October 12 2023.](#)
- [Noura Erakat on Democracy Now, October 13 2023](#)

As scholars and teachers, we work in nuance, especially in the face of attempts to over-simplify a deeply complicated situation. While we support those of the Jewish faith, we question and condemn the recent actions of the Israeli government, and we feel strongly that we can do both things at the same time. While we condemn the actions of Hamas on October 7th, we support Muslims and Palestinians struggling for justice. We stand firmly against antisemitism AND Islamophobia and call for a cease fire.

Now is a moment for action: active listening, active discussion, active learning, and active engagement. To facilitate this necessary action, we provide the following resources and opportunities for action:

- We will be hosting weekly call-your-legislators' meetings on Tuesdays at noon in our conference room for those interested in demanding action from our leaders.
- We will be sharing information about teach-ins on the conflict, its historical roots, and its future consequences.
- We will be open to collaboration with campus partners, students, and scholarly organizations to continue dialogue and maintain pressure for a cease fire.

We call for an end to the horrific humanitarian crisis that has blossomed in the last month while also acknowledging that the United States and its citizens have played an important role in the violence playing out in the region. We stand in solidarity with those seeking justice for the Palestinian people and a just peace in the region.

*We have learned and borrowed from the statements of the University of Minnesota WGSS Department, the National Women's Studies Association, the American Studies Association, and the thoughtful teach-ins offered by the KU American Studies and Jewish Studies departments, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Palestine Festival of Literature.