

Jewish Student Association

Description

JSA is the flagship Jewish student group on campus. JSA was formed by a cohort of Jewish student leaders who desired greater autonomy and ownership over Jewish life at Stanford. Our primary goals are to build a warm and inclusive community where students can identify with Jewish heritage and culture, learn about Jewish life and practice, and have fun connecting with their peers. We also aim to connect the Jewish community and the broader campus by collaborating with other religious and cultural groups on campus, educating campus about issues facing the Jewish community, and providing a Jewish voice on matters pertaining to the Jewish community. For example, in the recent past we spearheaded a resolution in the ASSU that aimed to recognize Jewish students' concerns about certain instances of unchecked anti-Semitism on our campus.

Rather than having a formal membership model, JSA aims to serve all Jewish undergrads on campus (estimated to be around 10% of the student body). We have a board of 12 members (1 president, 3 VPs, 8 chairs) as well as a Freshman Cohort of 11. Our email list, a fairly accurate indicator of our campus reach, has 500 subscriptions (mostly current students but also some alumni).

Areas of Focus

Our primary focus as an organization this year is inward facing, i.e. fostering a greater sense of community among Jewish students and creating avenues for Jewish students to explore their identities. Our secondary focus is to educate the campus about Jewish history and the history of anti-Semitism. Particularly, we wish to combat negative stereotypes about Jewish individuals and Jews as a collective. We're also attuned to the fact that criticism of the State of Israel can bleed into classical anti-Semitism. We value the right of students and faculty to critique Israeli policy, but we also request that such critiques remain sensitive to Jewish students' concerns.