



TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
The Lowy International School

The Lowy Quarterly

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Message from the Vice President

Prof. Millette Shamir
TAU Vice President International

Dear friends and colleagues,

With the temporary ceasefire still in effect, we at Tel Aviv University (TAU) – in addition to every Israeli and many around the world – are thinking about the hostages just released, as well as those who remain in captivity. It has been more than 50 days now since October 7th, and many have been working tirelessly since then for the release of those abducted.

In fact, I have never been prouder of the way the University community here has mobilized to advocate for the hostages, to support the families of the 1,200 killed by Hamas on October 7, to help the approximately 200,000 displaced from the north and south of Israel, and to assist the many in our TAU community who have been called up to the reserves.

Volunteers, including our international students, have [tended to fields and crops on farms in the south](#) that need extra help; and now TAU is providing a shuttle to University volunteers who are helping to keep factories running in the same area.

Many at TAU are working with children to provide not only psychological support, but joy – whether it be through [movie nights, art books, or theatrical plays](#). The University has also [welcomed hundreds of preschool, elementary school and high school students](#) on campus, where we are providing educational services. Moreover, our dormitories and our Sports Center opened their doors to evacuees from the north and south; and faculty, staff and even students in the TAU community have personally opened their homes to evacuees.

In some ways, it is hard to keep track of the manifold ways in which our TAU community members are volunteering, fundraising and doing what they can to support our country. However, we do know that we have been [volunteering and donating at an unprecedented rate](#). And we, moreover, have been touched by the many international forms of support. If you feel compelled to donate, please consider [TAU's Emergency Fund](#).

While these are difficult times, I see hope everywhere around me.

Yours,

Millette

Informational Updates

- **An Update from the President** – Read [TAU President Ariel Porat's statement](#) on the University's short- and long-term challenges.
- **New Funding for Students in the Reserves** – Based on need and the type and duration of their service, the 6,000 TAU students called up to reserve duty [will now receive between 2,000 and 9,000 NIS](#).
- **Now Accepting Applications** – Admissions for 2024-25 international programs at The Lowy International School [are now open](#).
- **View from TAU** – Michael Milstein (Moshe Dayan Center) [speaks to NPR](#) about the long road ahead for the Israeli military; Dan Ben-David (Department of Public Policy) [discusses with Deutsche Welle](#) the economic impact of the war; and Moti Golani (Department of Jewish History) [talks with CGTN](#) about how warming relations between China and the US could support the creation of a two-state solution.
- **Safety** – All members of the international community are instructed to follow the safety procedures in place. Currently, residents of greater Tel Aviv are asked to stay near secure areas. To view a list of safe areas on campus, see our [Safety, Health and Security webpage](#). For more information on safety protocols, see the [FAQ](#) below.
- **Mental Health** – TAU is significantly expanding the scope of psychological services available to the university community, including international students. There is a [24/7 mental health support line](#) available, with services in English; if you or someone you know is struggling, please contact the Student Life Team, which is on call 24/7, at 052-5346188.

Spotlight on Campus

TAU Perspectives: Q&A



Joshua Younger, MD
American School of Medicine alumnus

Joshua Younger is a medical doctor (OB Anesthesia) and an assistant professor at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra University in New York State; he is also an alumnus of TAU's American School of Medicine. He helped create a [pledge of support](#) from approximately 120 alumni of the program; all signees have offered their services to Israel as medical volunteers.

How did the pledge of support from TAU American School of Medicine alumni come about?

In the recent past, the alumni of the American Program community have grown more active and vocal ... what now exists is a strong connected community that is deeply committed to Tel Aviv University, its mission, and the community and country it serves.

Why was it important for you to help create this pledge?

In the wake of the hopelessness that has been and is still felt by many, this pledge was the least we could do. We all recognize that words are important, but so is action. As physicians with a variety of expertise unified in our admiration and love for Israel and Tel Aviv University, this was a natural response. We see ourselves as ambassadors for Tel Aviv University and Israel and would be remiss not to help in their time of need.

Was it a difficult decision to enroll as a medical volunteer with Israel's Ministry of Health?

Not at all! It is difficult to watch what is unfolding! It is difficult to see the suffering that has been trusted on the community and country. It is difficult not being there now to help!

Can you share some of what you've heard from others who signed onto the pledge?

As mentioned above, we have a very active and vocal community. Everyone wants to help in whatever way they can. This ranges from creating public awareness about Israel's need to defend itself, to calling out the double standards that the international community applies to Israel. Many are distressed about the negative attention and mischaracterization of Israel, the rise of antisemitism in our communities, and the overall wellbeing of Israel.

If you had one message you wanted to share with the world about Israel and/or TAU right now, what would that be?

We stand beside you. We are united. We are you.

Campus Activities



• **Science Lessons for Evacuees** – The Tel Aviv University Youth Team (*pictured above*) has been traveling to different evacuation centers across Israel, [providing experiential lessons in science](#).

• **Student Life Today** – Larry French, an Emergency and Disaster Management student, [talked to the Jerusalem Post](#) about what it's like to be an international student these days at TAU.

• **Antisemitism, Social Media and the Israel-Hamas War** – Our international students have been podcasting. [Maria Elul hosted a podcast episode](#) with TAU professor Havi Dreifuss to better understand the rise of antisemitism today. [And Ben Bright talked with Dr. Carmel Vaisman](#) about the relationship between social media and the war.

• **TAU's Relax Patrol** – A [new relaxation team](#) is rotating locations across campus to provide opportunities for recharging via yoga and other gentle physical activities (*pictured below*).



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are your plans for the next academic year?
TAU is currently planning for the 2024-25 academic year as scheduled. This includes all academic programming, fellowships, calls for collaboration and more. We are fully committed to continuing the tradition of academic excellence at our University and have exciting new programs and projects that we will announce in due time.

How safe is it at Tel Aviv University right now?
Our top priority is the safety and wellbeing of our students and international community. We are vigilantly monitoring any changes in circumstances within the country and are in frequent contact with government agencies; our procedures and instructions are in alignment with wider governmental protocol and recommendations.

For those of you at TAU or who will be joining us, our focus is on taking care of you, keeping you safe and getting you the support you need. We are following the government safety recommendations for those in Tel Aviv, which currently involves ensuring proximity to a secure area. There are many safe and secure areas across TAU, including in the campus dorms. In the Einstein dorms, there is a secure area between building A and B; in the Broshim complex, there is a secure apartment (whose number starts with 01) on each floor of each building. A list of safe areas can be found [here](#).

Additionally, while we will be continuing with all academic programs, we have implemented a hybrid format for the beginning of term to prioritize safety and provide a flexible learning environment. Once safety and circumstances allow, we will resume more extracurricular activities.

What is day-to-day life like?
While we are limiting extracurricular activities and focusing on safety, we are also doing our best to support the wellbeing of our students on campus. For any students joining us, housing options in the dormitories remain unchanged, and students have 24/7 access to the Student Life Team to help with any questions or adjustments to day-to-day life. There are also mental health supports available.

We are currently organizing small gathering opportunities in accordance with current official guidelines and protocol. The term for international students began on October 22 in a hybrid format, and we will resume planned extracurricular activities and in-person classes when appropriate.

While Israel has experienced an unprecedented tragedy, we are also all very touched by the ways in which the TAU community has rallied together to support each other and Israel. Now is a time for care and kindness, and this sentiment is also very much felt on campus.

Are there currently restrictions on educational or extracurricular activities?
Currently there are restrictions on both educational and extracurricular activities.

The term for international students began on Sunday, October 22 and classes will continue to be offered through a hybrid format to prioritize safety and provide flexibility.

Regarding extracurricular activities, all gatherings are following current governmental protocol (no more than 50 people gathered inside and 10 people outside) and are taking place in secure areas. In general, any excursions organized by The Lowy International School are cleared by the Israeli National Security Center and the Ministry of Education and coordinated with appropriate authorities (including Israeli police and army); we do not allow trips to any areas prohibited or deemed unsafe.

I need help with arranging travel/ordering food/getting mail or other day-to-day arrangements. Whom can I contact to help?

The Student Life Team is on call 24/7 and is here to assist regarding all day-to-day matters. The team can be contacted at 052-5346188.

What security measures are in place at the university?
The Lowy International School maintains frequent contact with government security agencies to stay informed of any potential escalations or risks on the horizon. In preparation for an emergency situation, all students receive safety training during orientation, a welcome kit with safety information, as well as regular communications. TAU maintains 24/7 security and staffing on campus and in the dormitories. For security reasons, anyone entering campus is required to show a student ID card or other form of ID and have their bags searched. Additionally, no one is permitted to enter a dormitory without a clearance chip (FOB).

Regarding the current circumstance in Israel, we are following the government safety instructions for those in Tel Aviv, which includes ensuring proximity to a secure area. There are many safe and secure areas across TAU, including in the campus dorms.

When an emergency situation arises, our priority is on contacting everyone promptly. The steps we take depend on the type of emergency; our school requires that all students carry a working mobile phone with an Israeli number, and we maintain student social-media groups such as a WhatsApp group. We also employ a buddy system.

Our [Safety, Health and Security](#) webpage provides greater details on approaches we would take should there be an emergency.

What do I do if I hear a siren?
Sirens are part of the "Iron Dome" system in Israel, which alert and protect us at any given time.

When a siren is heard in Tel Aviv (where the siren facility is located), you should spend approximately 1.5 minutes to make your way to a secure area. Once the siren stops, you should spend 10 additional minutes within the secure area. We also recommend that all members of our international community download the Home Front Command app, which will send push notifications in case a siren goes off around your location.

There are secure areas across TAU's campus and in the dorms. In the Einstein dorms, there is a secure area between building A and B; in the Broshim complex, there is a secure apartment (whose number starts with 01) on each floor of each building. A list of safe areas can be found [here](#).

I'm feeling anxious and scared. What should I do?
We want to emphasize that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. It takes courage to acknowledge when you are struggling and to ask for help. We are here to provide you with the resources you need to prioritize your mental health. If you are struggling, please contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188. They are on call 24/7. There is also a TAU mental health support line available 24/7. In the morning, you can contact psychological services at 03-8408505, or otherwise, at any time, leave a short WhatsApp message with your name and number at +972-50-2787037 and a psychologist will contact you.

In addition to seeking support, we encourage you to practice self-care, maintain a healthy lifestyle and connect with others. We recognize this may be a difficult time and we are here to help you.

I'd really appreciate meeting and being with other people right now. How can I do this?

We understand the need to be with people at this time, and the Student Life Team is organizing small gatherings in secure areas, in accordance with guidelines. Please reach out to the Student Life Team at 052-5346188. You are not alone.

What happens if things escalate in Israel?

Our top priority is the safety and wellbeing of our students and international community. We are vigilantly monitoring any changes to the circumstances in the country and are in frequent contact with government agencies. Should circumstances in Israel escalate and should there be a need for a change in protocol, we will communicate this to our international community. News updates regarding how the current situation in Israel is impacting The Lowy International School can be found on the [Important Updates in Light of the Security Situation](#) webpage.

While we will always reach out to our international students and researchers directly, subscribing to this newsletter is otherwise one of the best ways to receive any updates on changes in protocol for The Lowy International School.

What should I do if I don't want to be at TAU?
We want to emphasize that we respect and support any decision made regarding your time with us at Tel Aviv University. Whether you decide to stay, return home temporarily or leave indefinitely, we will cooperate and assist with the necessary arrangements. We recommend contacting the Student Life Team for further assistance.

What should I do in case of an emergency?
In the case of an emergency, The Lowy International School will be in direct contact with international students about next steps.

Please visit our [Safety, Health and Security](#) webpage on the steps that should be taken should there be an emergency. Additionally, safety and security and mental health contacts can be found on this page.

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