

Princeton students arrested at pro-Palestinian sit-in as Rutgers students begin to protest

By Katherine Dailey

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PRINCETON, New Jersey — Princeton University police arrested more than a dozen students Monday afternoon after pro-Palestinian protesters staged a sit-in at an administration office, while Rutgers students set up encampments to demand the state university divest from Israel.

The two New Jersey schools are among the latest around the country to see student protests as the Israel-Gaza war nears its seventh month.

At Princeton, Monday marked the fifth day of protests on campus. Two graduate students were [arrested the first day](#) of the encampment but have since been released. No other arrests had been made until Monday. The latest arrests were made by campus police, but threats of further arrests were made by Princeton town police, who generally do not have jurisdiction over campus grounds. According to a message from University President Christopher Eisgruber, “All those arrested received summonses for trespassing and have been barred from campus. The students will also face University discipline, which may extend to suspension or expulsion.”

Those involved in the Monday sit-in at the campus' Clio Hall were arrested, and two were put onto a university bus. Protesters then gathered around the bus but dispersed after students were released. At this point, it seemed that criminal charges had been dropped, given statements to the crowd from Assistant Vice President for Public Safety Kenneth Strother Jr. Others remained inside, though, and after the bus departed, protesters moved to a rear entrance of the building and blocked the door. All students who were arrested will face disciplinary measures, according to organizer statements to the crowd, and are expected to be removed from campus housing and barred from campus.

Another student, who is believed not to be affiliated with the main protest, was arrested about two hours after the initial arrests, outside Whig Hall, the building immediately next door.

At Rutgers' New Brunswick campus, students set up tents and urged the school to divest from Israel, among other demands, according to the Rutgers Endowment Justice Collective and Students for Justice in Palestine.

Groups on both campuses have faculty support. At Princeton, the Faculty for Justice at Princeton, including history professor Max Weiss, have worked with student organizers and, on Monday, helped mediate between law enforcement and protesters.

At Rutgers, the AAUP-AFT and the Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union said it will establish a faculty committee to monitor the situation on campus.

“As educators and researchers at Rutgers University, members of our union have varying positions on the wider issues in the Palestine-Israel conflict,” the union said in a statement. “But regardless of our differences, we are overwhelmingly united in defending the rights of our members and our students to speak, assemble, and protest, especially in the face of the threats and repression students face today on campuses across this nation.”

Rutgers University President Jonathan Holloway [has said](#) he opposes the divestment movement.

“Our students want to make a difference in a struggle that has cost far too many innocent lives and that threatens so many more,” he said in a statement Monday. “I respect their right to protest in ways that do not interfere with university operations or with the ability of their fellow students to learn.”