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Statement by the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University, in the Aftermath of Pittsburgh:

The Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University is saddened by the tragic violence against Jews engaged in worship at the Tree of Life synagogue, which represents the largest incident of violence against Jews in American history. We extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims. We are horrified by the evil of antisemitism that has persisted throughout history and the more general scourge of racism that has led to the horrific events of the past weeks. As members of a department that studies Jewish culture across many different periods of history and geographical settings, we see the attack on the synagogue through the prism of millennia of shifting anti-Jewish ideologies and the many instances of violence against Jews. We stand committed to teaching about the cultural and religious heritage of Jews and Judaism, in all its diversity, especially against the many misconceptions spread by anti-Jewish and antisemitic rhetoric. We also stand committed to the task of analyzing this and other instances of anti-Jewish violence both in its relation to the recent rise of racism, xenophobia, and hate-based violence in the United States and in relation to the long history of anti-Judaism and antisemitism. We stand in solidarity with the Jewish community of Pittsburgh and all those worldwide who share a common goal of eradicating antisemitism, racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, and any other forms of discrimination and violence.