

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, ACADEMIC SENATE

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

Robert C. May
Telephone: (510) 987-0711
Email: robert.may@ucop.edu

*Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
Faculty Representative to the Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200*

April 25, 2019

**CHANCELLOR CAROL CHRIST
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY**

**CHANCELLOR KIM WILCOX
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
RIVERSIDE**

**CHANCELLOR GARY MAY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS**

**CHANCELLOR PRADEEP KHOSLA
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SAN DIEGO**

**CHANCELLOR HOWARD GILLMAN
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE**

**CHANCELLOR HENRY YANG
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SANTA BARBARA**

**CHANCELLOR GENE BLOCK
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
LOS ANGELES**

**CHANCELLOR GEORGE BLUMENTHAL
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SANTA CRUZ**

**CHANCELLOR DOROTHY LELAND
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED**

**CHANCELLOR SAMUEL HAWGOOD
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SAN FRANCISCO**

RE: Chancellors' Statement on Academic Boycotts of Israeli Institutions

Dear Chancellors,

The Academic Council is writing to express its concern about the attached letter signed by the Chancellors of the ten University of California campuses, about which the Council became aware *circa* December 2018. The content of the letter was to express the UC Chancellors' collective opposition to an academic boycott of Israeli institutions. The Council's concern is not so much on the content of the letter as it is with the process by which this letter was produced, and the possible chilling effects the letter may have on the climate on our campuses.

The Academic Senate, as guardians of academic freedom, unequivocally affirms the right of *individual* members of the University community to express their opinions on matters of university, national, and international concern, and the Academic Senate cannot condone any limitation on that right. Chancellors are no exception. The Chancellors' letter, however, gives a different impression. Instead of stating clearly that the letter represents the individual view of each of the Chancellors, it opens with the statement that they write "As chancellors of the University of

California campuses”; this acknowledgement, along with the letter being on official University of California, Office of the President (UCOP) letterhead, conveys that their letter is a statement of university policy. To our knowledge, there is currently no official University of California policy or position pertaining to an academic boycott of Israeli institutions.

Within the bounds set by APM-010 (Academic Freedom) and APM-015 (The Faculty Code of Conduct), as well as relevant state, national, and Constitutional law, faculty have a right to engage voluntarily in boycotts; moreover, faculty are protected by academic freedom in expressing their disagreement with the Chancellors’ position on this matter. Nevertheless, as the attached statement from the University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity and Equity (UCAADE) makes clear, reservations remain about “the potential negative effects the statement may have on various constituents of the University community, and on the general campus climate.”

Since, if there were an academic boycott, it is the faculty who would be the primary participants and audience, the Academic Council was disappointed to discover that there was not wider consultation with the Academic Senate prior to the release of the Chancellors’ statement. Only two of the ten divisions (Davis and Santa Barbara) were consulted by their chancellors, and there was no consultation with the systemwide Academic Senate. The importance of this consultation is only made more acute given the highly charged national debate surrounding this issue.

In light of these concerns, and in the context of ongoing debate on academic boycotts within the University and nationwide, the Academic Council affirms the statement of the University Committee on Academic Freedom (UCAAF) in the attached letter that we would “welcome an invitation from the chancellors to share in the process of making, or clarifying, university policy on academic boycotts” if such a policy were to be contemplated. The Academic Council, however, is of the view that any such official policy or position by the University is neither necessary nor appropriate.

On behalf of the Academic Council,



Robert C. May, Chair
Academic Council

Encl

Cc: George Kieffer, Chair, University of California Board of Regents
Janet Napolitano, President, University of California
Michael Brown, Provost, University of California

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, DIVERSITY,
AND EQUITY (UCAADE)
Lok Siu, Chair
lok.siu@berkeley.edu

ACADEMIC SENATE
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

February 26, 2019

ROBERT MAY
ACADEMIC COUNCIL CHAIR

RE: UCAADE's Response to the Chancellors' Statement on Academic Boycotts

Dear Robert,

UCAADE has had the opportunity to discuss the Chancellors' undated letter regarding academic boycotts and would like to register the Committee's concerns. UCAADE's interest in this issue pertains to the potential negative effects the statement may have on various constituents of the university and on the general campus climate.

The Committee is alarmed by the Chancellors' lack of consultation with UC faculty on this highly contentious issue. By collectively signing a document issued on University letterhead, the Chancellors' statement, regardless of individual intent, gives the appearance of an institutional policy. Moreover, when considering the potential divisiveness of this statement and its possible adverse effects on campus climate, the Chancellors' actions become even more troubling. Without adequate consultation with UC faculty and the Senate, the Chancellors' collective decision to undertake this step undermines University protocol and contradicts the core principle of shared governance.

The Committee is also concerned about the Chancellors' commitment to academic freedom and wants to reaffirm the principles of academic freedom as outlined in APM 010 (partially excerpted below):

"The University of California is committed to upholding and preserving principles of academic freedom. These principles reflect the University's fundamental mission, which is to discover knowledge and to disseminate it to its students and to society at large. The principles of academic freedom protect freedom of inquiry and research, freedom of teaching, and freedom of expression and publication...

Members of the faculty are entitled as University employees to the full protections of the Constitution of the United States and of the Constitution of the State of California. These protections are in addition to whatever rights, privileges, and responsibilities attach to the academic freedom of university faculty."

On behalf of UCAADE, I thank you for the opportunity to respond to this important matter and to reaffirm our commitment to the core principles of shared governance and academic freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lok Siu', written in a cursive style.

Lok Siu
Chair, UCAADE

cc: Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Academic Council Vice Chair
Hilary Baxter, Academic Senate Executive Director
UCAADE Members



UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM (UCAF)
Eric Rauchway, Chair
earauchway@ucdavis.edu

Assembly of the Academic Senate
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607-5200
Phone: (510) 987-9466
Fax: (510) 763-0309

February 19, 2019

**ROBERT MAY, CHAIR
ACADEMIC SENATE**

RE: CHANCELLORS' LETTER ON ACADEMIC BOYCOTTS

Dear Robert,

In response to a request from Council, committee members discussed the statement of December 2018, signed by the ten chancellors, reiterating their "long-standing opposition to an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions and/or individual scholars."

UCAF does not know whether a statement by the chancellors has the force of policy, nor do we wish to infringe on the prerogative of whichever body would appropriately decide that matter.

UCAF agrees that if the chancellors were to represent this statement as University policy regarding academic freedom, Council and UCAF should object to such a claim. This objection would apply to any chancellors' statement about academic freedom made without consulting the Senate.

UCAF further believes the Senate should welcome an invitation from the chancellors to share in the process of making, or clarifying, university policy on academic boycotts, in the event such an invitation arrives.

Sincerely,

Eric Rauchway, Chair
UCAF



1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607-5200
Phone: (510) 987-9074
<http://www.ucop.edu>

As chancellors of the University of California campuses, we write to reaffirm our long-standing opposition to an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions and/or individual scholars. Our commitment to continued engagement and partnership with Israeli, as well as Palestinian colleagues, colleges, and universities is unwavering. We believe a boycott of this sort poses a direct and serious threat to the academic freedom of our students and faculty, as well as the unfettered exchange of ideas and perspectives on our campuses, including debate and discourse regarding conflicts in the Middle East.

Chancellor Carol T. Christ
University of California, Berkeley

Chancellor Gary S. May
University of California, Davis

Chancellor Howard Gillman
University of California, Irvine

Chancellor Gene Block
University of California, Los Angeles

Chancellor Dorothy Leland
University of California, Merced

Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox
University of California, Riverside

Chancellor Pradeep Khosla
University of California, San Diego

Chancellor Sam Hawgood
University of California, San Francisco

Chancellor Henry T. Yang
University of California, Santa Barbara

Chancellor George R. Blumenthal
University of California, Santa Cruz