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University of California statement on intolerance of campus bigotry

Staff Writer

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To the University of California community,

We write today to condemn the alarming, profoundly disappointing acts of bigotry, intolerance, and intimidation we have seen on our campuses over these past several weeks. It is our shared responsibility to maintain a sense of community where everyone feels safe and welcome.

Some of the rhetoric we have seen and heard over the past month at campus protests, online, in student government meetings, and in classrooms has been shocking and abhorrent. Let us be clear: There is no place for hate, bigotry, or intimidation at the University of California. Period.

Antisemitism is antithetical to our values and our campus codes of conduct and is unacceptable under our principles of community. It will not be tolerated.

Similarly, Islamophobia is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We will work to ensure that those who advocate on behalf of Palestinians can also be confident of their physical safety on our campuses.

It is our collective responsibility to foster a safe and welcoming learning, living, and working environment while also promoting the principles of free expression and academic freedom. We take our obligation to uphold the First Amendment seriously, even when the viewpoints expressed are hateful or repugnant. We cannot censor voices or ban groups we disagree with, so long as those voices and groups comply with state and federal laws and with university policy.

But free speech is not absolute, and violations of policy or law will have consequences. [Regents Policy 4403: Statement of Principles Against Intolerance](#) calls on UC leaders “actively to challenge anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination when and whenever they emerge within the University community.” We will uphold this policy. Our campuses have and will continue to impose consequences on behavior that crosses the line into unprotected speech, such as persistent harassment of individuals or groups, or credible threats of physical violence. We will also take steps against any violations of the law or university policy such as disruptions of university activity, violence, or vandalism. Our educators must continue to provide a supportive and welcoming environment for all students and avoid using classroom time for improper political indoctrination.

And while words matter a great deal — and we stand firmly by the words we share today — this is also a time for action. Over the coming days, President Drake will announce a series of initiatives to help us address the current climate on our campuses, provide additional support for our students, staff, and faculty, and improve the public discourse on this issue.

Members of the UC community may have differing opinions on the Middle East conflict, but our stand on intolerance and intimidation in our own community is unequivocal: We will not stand for it, and we will do everything in our power to ensure that the University of California is a safe community for all.

Michael V. Drake, M.D.

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The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.