

Higher Ground:

**The Alignment of UCI's Policies, Principles, and Practices
with the UC Regents' Principles Against Intolerance**

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Background: UC Regents' Principles Against Intolerance

Adopted on 22 January 2016, the UC Regents' Final Report of the Working Group Principles Against Intolerance reaffirms and challenges the entire university community to build and sustain a culture that values all people while vigorously responding to acts of intolerance. Acts of intolerance -- and especially unacknowledged acts of bias -- not only undermine our obligations to one another as a university community, but also impair our core mission as a public land grant research university. Indeed, reports of a growing number and variety of anti-Semitic incidents spurred the regents to investigate the climate for Jewish students beginning in 2014-2015. This investigation included careful consideration of formal and informal reports of anti-Semitism and consultation with local campus administrations, students and academic senates. In September 2015 these activities yielded a draft statement of principles against intolerance. This draft statement drew unprecedented attention to anti-Semitism in general and anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism in particular. Following public comment that called for broader attention to other forms of bias and concerns over possible limits on the Free Speech and Academic Freedom, Chair Monica Lozano withdrew this draft document and tasked a working group led by regent Eddie Island to revise the statement. In developing the final statement, the working group met several times, consulted with leading national experts on anti-Semitism and Free Speech, and hosted a public forum. The student regent solicited input from students throughout the system. The final report consists of a contextual statement and a set of Principles Against Intolerance along with associated university policies. It is grounded in the centrality of diversity to our university community and the imperative to be intentional in improving the climate for all.

Campus Life and the Jewish Student Experience

For UCI, the regents' final report poses a central question: is our campus commitment to inclusive excellence capacious enough to do more to improve the climate for all students, including Jewish students? The answer is unambiguously yes. The evidence is clear that more attention is necessary. In the 2013 climate survey, Jewish students were among student populations that felt the least respected. (The others are African American males and transgender students.) Responses to questions about belonging and respect for religion in the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (2010, 2012, 2014) show improvement overtime, but UCI Jewish students still lag behind their peers at other UC campuses. They were less likely to feel they belong at UCI compared to other students at the university. In contrast, Jewish students at the other UC's were more likely to feel that they belong.

At UCI there is progress being made in the increasing percentage of students that feel free to express their religious beliefs on campus, and that they agree their religious beliefs are respected. Some portion of students who do not feel their religious beliefs are respected, do feel free to express themselves. In 2010, over three-quarters of Jewish students at UCI had heard negative or stereotypical views about religions from other students. By 2014, while still high, it had declined to 41%. This seems to be less of an issue among students at the other UC campuses. While less common than among students, the proportion of faculty and staff overheard expressing negative views have almost doubled between 2010 and 2014.

Although Jewish students generally reported high levels of satisfaction with their careers at UCI, they also experience implicit and explicit bias, and perhaps more disturbing, fear. Incidents include: unconscious bias such as the casual use of demeaning stereotypes or ignorance about Jewish religious observances; heckling or other disruptive actions at sponsored events; and anti-Semitic graffiti in lavatory and other public places. Far more complicated but no less real are the consequences arising from political disagreements regarding the relationship of Israel to Palestinians. For Jewish students who closely identify with Israel as a Jewish state, constitutionally protected events in which the policies of the state of Israel are vigorously criticized can be deeply offensive. These events might be sponsored by on-campus or off-campus organizations. For example, invited speakers or sponsored exhibitions have made outrageous one-to-one comparisons between the policies of the state Israel towards Palestinians to those of Nazi Germany which sought to liquidate European Jewry through genocidal violence. Further, political disagreements over the Middle East conflict has contributed to a sense of situational social isolation as non-Jewish students or student organizations are reluctant or unwilling to partner on social justice projects with students or student organizations that support Israel.

In light of these points, UCI should focus more attention on ensuring that Jewish students feel fully included on the campus and safe during events where Israel is criticized. Several recommendations are offered below, following a summary of current activities at UCI that support Jewish students.

Academic Programs: Jewish Studies

UCI offers numerous opportunities to support Jewish students and to raise awareness of the Jewish experience among all students. Opportunities include coursework, experiential learning, travel to Israel, and social and community activities. The **Program in Jewish Studies** forms part of the School of Humanities academic programs. It was a product of a generous gift from Robert Teller (president of Costa Mesa-based Tel-Phil Enterprises) to establish a Chair in Jewish History in 1990. Augmented by contributions from campus employees and the wider community, the Teller Chair has been held by two highly accomplished scholars. In 2012, Professor Mathias Lehmann succeeded Professor Daniel Schroeter as the incumbent of the Teller Chair. Professor Lehmann is an internationally renowned scholar of early modern and modern Jewish history and Sephardic Studies. A faculty steering committee—reflecting departments in the humanities and social sciences—mounts an interdisciplinary program of study for undergraduates. The minor introduces students to art, literature, language and social and political institutions of Jews from ancient to modern times. The Teller professor also oversees an active public affairs program that includes lectures and conferences on topics in Jewish life and culture. Open to the public, these events feature scholars from universities based in the United States and abroad. Furthermore, the school's two-year **Hebrew Language Program**, spanning introductory to intermediate levels, complements the program in Jewish Studies.

Academic Programs: Study Abroad and Collaborations with Universities in Israel

As a globally preeminent university, UCI engages with scholars and universities throughout the world, including the state of Israel. Through education abroad programs, UCI students can study at partner universities in Israel with which we have entered into formal collaborative agreements:

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel Institute of Technology, and Tel Aviv University. As a reciprocating campus, UCI also hosts undergraduates from Israel. Our academic programs and research centers have a long history of educating and sponsoring Israeli nationals in our graduate programs as well as hosting scholars for seminars and lectures. Over time, UCI scholars and researchers have collaborated with their peers on wide-ranging research and creative activity in virtually all of the academic and professional schools, ranging from biological sciences, business, computer and information science, engineering, humanities, medicine, social science and social ecology, and physical sciences.

Difficult Dialogues: Programming to Promote Pluralism

As a public research university, campus leaders are acutely conscious of the local consequences of global politics. This is particularly the case in reference to the Middle East conflict. Our focus has been on deploying our research, teaching and service mission to raise awareness and promote constructive dialogue. As early as 2007, UCI received a highly competitive **Difficult Dialogues** grant from the Ford Foundation to develop programming to promote pluralism and academic freedom. UCI designed three new courses to educate students about contemporary issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, traditions of religious conflict and religious tolerance, and peace building. These courses were complemented by a series of teaching seminars to increase the ability of faculty and graduate teaching assistants to facilitate dialogue in existing courses that deal with sensitive or difficult topics.

Olive Tree Initiative: A Model Program in Experiential Learning about the Middle East

Building on the **Difficult Dialogues** grant, the campus launched the **Olive Tree Initiative** (OTI). OTI is an innovative model of experiential learning adapted to intractable conflicts that combines rigorous study on campus with a short-term study abroad component to the conflicted region and close mentorship of students that focuses on leadership development. Led by Political Science Professor and Executive Director Daniel Wehrenfennig, the mission of OTI is twofold: (1) to promote conflict analysis and resolution through experiential education by providing students with the training and experiences needed to better negotiate and solve conflicts; and (2) to develop leaders by training students to bridge the gap between theory and practice by applying the skills and knowledge they acquire to campus and community settings. As of 2016, OTI has led 15 trips to the Middle East, including Israel, Palestinian Authority, and Jordan. A total of 400 participants, including faculty, students and community members, have studied two major geopolitical fault-lines: Israeli-Palestinian and the Turkey-Armenia conflicts. OTI has become a signature program of the University of California with chapters at the Berkeley, San Diego, Santa Barbara campuses as well as at CSU San Diego, Stanford University, and the University of Glasgow. (<http://www.olivetreeinitiative.org>).

Student Life, Campus Organizations, and Community Partners

UCI takes pride in the diversity of its student population and is dedicated to promoting an inclusive culture that aims at excellence through diversity. This commitment animates the UCI experience. Jewish students participate in all aspects of campus life. The campus provides dietary and housing accommodations for observant students. Among about one hundred

registered student organizations, there are several that afford opportunities for forging community, developing interests, and exploring identity. These are Alpha Epsilon Phi, Alpha Epsilon, Chabad, Hillel, Jewish Law Association, Students Supporting Israel at UCI, and OTI.

The cultural life of the campus is complemented and enriched by an active Jewish community in the southern California area. Greater Irvine is home to several synagogues that reflect the breadth of Judaism. The region is also home to Orange County Hillel, Anti-Defamation League, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center. The Jewish Federation and Family Services of Orange County sponsors the Rose Project (<https://jewishorangecounty.org/get-involved/college/about-the-rose-project>), a pro-active partnership between the UCI campus and the regional Jewish community that aims to bring about a more respectful campus environment and a robust support network for UCI's Jewish students. The Rose Project provides a robust platform for university administrators and on-campus and regional Jewish organizations to engage in constructive dialogue on matters affecting Jewish student life. It also provides social, religious, and cultural experiences for students to explore their Jewish and pro-Israel identities. In addition to the Rose Project, the Federation runs the Jewish Campus Leadership Initiative, a multi-year curriculum that helps prepare Jewish students at UCI, CSU Fullerton, and Chapman to be successful leaders on their campuses. The curriculum is augmented by an extensive mentorship program, where students are matched with professionals in Orange County who share their field of study.

Free Speech and Campus Expectations of Mutual Respect

Chancellor Gillman has emphasized the importance of free speech and mutual respect in a series of campus statements and messages. (<http://chancellor.uci.edu/engagement/campus-communications/2016/160923-free-speech-in-our-scholarly-community.html> and <http://chancellor.uci.edu/engagement/campus-communications/2016/160429-free-speech.html>). These expectations are grounded in the campus Principles of Community. The principles form an integral part of the orientation of new students. All registered student organizations must acknowledge them as well. Chancellor Gillman has elevated attention to Free Speech competency. The campus maintains robust on-line resources for students, employees and the public alike regarding the definition of free speech, policies and procedures protecting free speech, protection from discrimination. (<http://freespeech.uci.edu/#/>) In 2016, Chancellor Gillman and Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky explored the history of free speech with students and have discussed contemporary student views about regulating speech in a series of national publications. (<http://www.chronicle.com/article/What-Students-Think-About-Free/235897> & <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-chemerinsky-gillman-free-speech-on-campus-20160331-story.html>). A book on this topic is forthcoming.

Constructive Engagement: Balancing Free Speech and Mutual Respect

The UCI Division of Student Affairs operationalizes the campus free speech and mutual respect expectations through constructive engagement. This model manages the time, place and manner of the exercise of free speech through active engagement, deliberate socialization, unique teachable moments, and collaborative cross-divisional planning. It is proactive rather than reactive. Representatives engage sponsors in advance of their scheduled events to review logistics and security as required by university policy and local ordinances. This may include

designating space for counter-events. In cases involving events that contradict the campus expectations, representatives remind sponsors of the potential for creating a hostile or intolerant climate. Student affairs professionals—and, if required, members of the UCI Police Department—monitor events to ensure the exercise of free speech and public safety. In cases where sponsors or events have targeted groups, the chancellor or other campus representatives have publicly criticized constitutionally protected speech or other activities. (<http://inclusion.uci.edu/2016/05/09/inclusion-at-uci/>)

Wrongdoing and Institutional Accountability

Discrimination, bias and harassment has no place at UCI. As a public research university, the campus enforces all relevant federal and state anti-discrimination laws through an institutional accountability framework. This framework provides for responding to allegations of bias and supporting victims while providing due process for the accused. Any student or employee or community member can report anonymously or by name any act of intolerance, such as hate speech, bias incident or hostile climate to a hot-line. Reports can also be submitted through an on-line web-portal (https://ucsystems.ethicspointvp.com/custom/ucs_ccc/default.asp). The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (OEOD) investigates complaints and allegations of violations that are related to discrimination and equal opportunity laws, policies and procedures. OEOD also provides options for informal resolution for complainants. (<http://www.oeod.uci.edu/>)

The Division of Student Affairs and the Academic Senate oversee mechanisms for responding to alleged infringements of student conduct (http://aisc.uci.edu/policies/pacaos/uc_uci_policies.pdf) and the faculty code of rights (http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/apm/apm-015.pdf). They utilize trained peer evaluators to review allegations. Both grievant and accused participate in a hearing to consider evidence and have the opportunity to address the reviewing board and committee. Each body may recommend sanctions to the campus administration based on the nature and severity of the infraction and the degree of responsibility accepted by the accused.

These formal processes are complemented by alternative models of conflict resolution such as restorative justice. Under the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct, the restorative justice program is a collaborative decision-making process that includes victims, offenders, and others seeking to hold offenders accountable by having them (a) accept and acknowledge responsibility for their offenses, (b) to the best of their ability repair the harm they caused to victims and communities, and (c) work to reduce the risk of repeat offense by building positive social ties to the community. (<https://aisc.uci.edu/restorative-justice.php>).

Recommendations to Combat Anti-Semitism

As described in this document, UCI has formulated and implemented a broad range of programs and initiatives to build a campus community where all expect equity, support diversity and practice inclusion. An overarching goal of these programs is to ensure that students can participate in all aspects of campus life in without fearing for their safety. While this institutional commitment aligns with the UC Regents' Principles Against Intolerance, the ongoing experience

of UCI's Jewish students calls for the campus to take additional steps to fully address the Regents specific concerns with anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism. The following specific actions are recommended:

1. Develop regular annual programming that specifically focuses on the serious challenge of anti-Semitism in the United States and around the world and that highlights the circumstances under which legitimate anti-Zionism protesting crosses the line of acceptability and becomes a form of anti-Semitism.
2. Deploy programming for student government leaders to educate themselves about these questions and the concerns of Jewish students in order to ensure that intolerant or insensitive comments of the sort seen on other campuses are pro-actively prevented.
3. Work with social justice student groups to invite Jewish students to be part of activities that reflect shared values.

As part of an on-going commitment, the campus will continually refine and enhance our efforts to improve the campus climate.

Actions to Advance the Regents Principles Against Intolerance

The Regents' statement moves beyond issues specific to Jewish students to underscore more generally the university's commitment to inclusiveness. Below is a set of potential actions designed to ensure that the entire spirit of the Regents' statement is fully integrated into the life of the campus. They are organized into three categories: campus accountability, education and training, and responsive engagement.

Campus Accountability

1. Disseminate campus and regent's principles broadly:
 - post on campus web-pages immediately
 - create opportunities for students, faculty and staff to acknowledge principles when joining the campus, registering organizations, serving in leadership positions
 - incorporate into campus events application process for space requests for on-campus events.
2. Develop and adopt an Inclusive Excellence Index that aligns with the principles:
 - include metrics for sense of belonging, respect for religion, and physical safety
 - address anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment
 - report annually in State of Inclusive Excellence at UCI.
3. Clarify UCI's Free Speech Policy
 - time, place and manner of exercising free speech

- disruptive actions and speech that infringe on constitutionally protected rights to education, speech and assembly.
4. Increase awareness about anti-Semitism and reporting acts of intolerance and bias:
 - incorporate into existing anti-discrimination information and regularly disseminate.
 5. Publicly and specifically name acts of bias and bigotry
 - including but not limited to anti-Semitism
 - always ensuring the integrity of on-going investigations and due process.
 6. Incorporate principles into the curricula of all recognized student, staff and faculty certificate programs.
 7. Support the training of campus police on hate crimes, hate speech, intergroup conflict and extremism, and racial profiling:
 - utilize the Anti-Defamation League law enforcement training on hate crimes, including anti-Semitism and bigotry of all kinds.
 - consult with the Orange County Human Rights Commission.

Education and Training

1. Sponsor Freshmen Seminar Series in anti-bigotry
 - topics to include anti-Semitism and other forms of bias.
2. Support course development on the Jewish experience to satisfy General Education
 - multicultural Requirement
 - international Affairs Requirement.
3. Support undergraduate capstone and research projects on anti-bigotry
 - provide competitive grants to support faculty mentors and student researchers
 - support an annual student prizes on promoting tolerance and combatting bigotry.
4. Establish faculty chairs in academic units dedicated to:
 - the study of Israel
 - understanding bigotry
 - religion and religious tolerance.
5. Expand participation in the Olive Tree Initiative
 - accommodate more students, faculty and community members
 - link with capstone experience for more majors and minors.
6. Incorporate principles into student conduct peer review and restorative justice training.

Responsive Engagement

1. Establish an advisory board on campus climate for Jewish students to advise the vice provost for academic diversity equity and inclusion.
2. Establish and augment existing campus programming on faith and belief and religious customs and practices in historical and contemporary contexts:
 - public lectures
 - annual religious fair
 - tours of houses of worship.
3. Host annual Inclusive Excellence gala to acknowledge individual contributions and recognize best practices in support of the principles:
 - student, staff, faculty and community recognition.