

## **A RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF EQUALIZED ACCESS TO UCLA FOR NON-COMMERCIAL SPEECH EVENTS; SPECIFICALLY IN REGARDS TO SJP**

**WHEREAS** On October 31st, the Administrative Vice Chancellor sent Students for Justice in Palestine at UCLA a cease and desist<sup>1</sup> letter that asserted that NSJP's logo "inaccurately state[s], suggests], or implies] that the University sponsors, supports, endorses or affiliates with" the NSJP conference; and followed with a change in policy regarding use of UCLA Markers

**WHEREAS** the Student Labor Organizing Conference<sup>2</sup>(2018) "advertised its conference with a sign that prominently featured the abbreviation "UCLA" in font size larger than that on the rest of the sign – which the October 31st letter orders NSJP with SJP courtesy copied to cease and desist from doing. SLAP has confirmed that no similar administrative action was taken against them;" and

**WHEREAS** The Vice Chancellor also asserted that NSJP's use of the bear in whole can be associated with UCLA's official mascot, the Bruin bear, referencing Cal. Ed. Code Section 92000. The wording of the section does not legally apply to the NSJP logo and the statute only prohibits "use [of "the University of California"], or any abbreviation of it or any name of which these words are a part," according to the ACLU of Southern California;<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS** The ACLU of Southern California also stated that contrary to the Vice Chancellor's assertion in his cease and desist letter, "the bear on the poster is not the Bruin Bear, but a general California grizzly, the official state animal of California since 1953, and which adorns the state flag of California. Cal. Gov. Sections 420, 425. California grizzly bears have been associated with the state of California since the 1840s, predating the existence of the University of California<sup>4</sup>";

**WHEREAS** "Viewpoint discrimination against supporters of Palestinian rights at UCLA is not new. Several such incidents at UCLA are detailed in a 2015 report by Palestine Legal and the Center for Constitutional Rights. These include incidents in which, for example: the university investigated a professor for posting links with information about the boycott of Israel to his

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<sup>1</sup>Copy of cease-and-desist letter as shown in article from Jewish Journal, Nov 1, 2018, <http://jewishjournal.com/news/nation/241234/ucla-sends-cess-and-desist-letter-sjp-logo/?fbclid=IwAR20JNsP1yBCTuFQ0xw6qDnhBBREIL00Z3iuQpGgkmg6r29nS5hxGHobMO4>

<sup>2</sup> Official Facebook page of SLOC, <https://www.facebook.com/events/2127305233969274/>.

<sup>3</sup> Response from ACLU and Palestine Legal regarding Cease-and-desist from Administrative Vice Chancellor Beck [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VO0tqqFfXV5O1hEaQ8A3sXc4RCxz9Ixl0DTPr7f6SAE/edit?usp=s\\_haring](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VO0tqqFfXV5O1hEaQ8A3sXc4RCxz9Ixl0DTPr7f6SAE/edit?usp=s_haring)

<sup>4</sup> Response from ACLU and Palestine Legal regarding Cease-and-desist from Administrative Vice Chancellor Beck [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VO0tqqFfXV5O1hEaQ8A3sXc4RCxz9Ixl0DTPr7f6SAE/edit?usp=s\\_haring](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VO0tqqFfXV5O1hEaQ8A3sXc4RCxz9Ixl0DTPr7f6SAE/edit?usp=s_haring)

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course website, and a student government official conditioned funding for an event on the requirement that organizers maintain “zero connection” with anyone who supports divestment of companies doing business with Israel<sup>5</sup>. On at least one other previous occasion, UCLA incorrectly warned SJP that its slogan “We the Optimists Divest”<sup>6</sup> violated trademark law according to the ACLU of Southern California; and,

**WHEREAS**, The ACLU of Southern California concluded that the “University’s motivation for silencing SJP seems to be opposition to the group’s viewpoint and/or perceived viewpoint. This can also be highlighted in the Vice Chancellor disassociating UCLA’s name from certain aspects of the logo to be UCLA’s endorsement of violence, a view held by numerous external entities<sup>7</sup>. The ACLU of Southern California states that simply, “restrictions based on viewpoint are prohibited. Pleasant Grove City, Utah v. Summum, 555 U.S. 460, 469 (2009)”;

**WHEREAS**, Given the rise of anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian and Islamophobic rhetoric utilized by white supremacists and some politicians, there are many students at UCLA who fear being targeted simply because they are exercising their constitutionally protected right to express their political views. Students and faculty face harassment and abuse for simply supporting pro-Palestinian causes, from websites such as Canary Mission<sup>8</sup>, “a campus watch-list with a history of relying on student-given footage and material to target pro-Palestinian student activists: causing direct personal repercussions, including limiting their travel and employment opportunities.”<sup>9</sup> Canary Mission regularly targets the Muslim Student Association, an organization that serves to create a community for Muslim students and is a Mother organization on campus, in whole as a place for fostering radicalization<sup>10</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, Muslim women were verbally harassed and physically assaulted on November 6th by individuals protesting the NJSP conference and have received minimal support from the university regarding the instance;

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<sup>5</sup> Letter from ACLU of Southern California, Palestine Legal, and the Center for Constitutional Rights, to UCLA Chancellor Gene Block, November 18, 2015, <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/548748b1e4b083fc03ebf70e/t/564cc262e4b0411c3eeb65d6/1447871074489/Lette%20r+PL+CCR+ACLU+to+UCLA+Re+Viewpoint+Discrimination.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Palestine Legal interview with SJP at UCLA alumni [names withheld], November, 2018; Palestine Legal interview with SJP at UCLA representatives [names withheld], November, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Daily Bruin article on Rep. Brad Sherman’s letter to Gene Block and Response <https://dailybruin.com/2018/10/23/us-rep-brad-sherman-chancellor-block-exchange-letters-on-sjp-and-free-speech/>

Daily Bruin article on LA City Council’s call for NSJP cancellation <http://dailybruin.com/2018/11/08/la-city-council-calls-on-ucla-to-cancel-students-for-justice-in-palestine-event/>

<sup>8</sup> Canary Mission archive of UCLA students and faculty, <https://canarymission.org/search?q=ucla>

<sup>9</sup> ASUCD Senate resolution 2017-2018 SR#19 by Senator Perwez, <https://asu.cd.ucdavis.edu/senate-resolutions-2017-2018/>

<sup>10</sup> Canary Mission page regarding the Muslim Student Association, <https://canarymission.org/organization/msa/>

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**WHEREAS**, UCLA students and faculty members wrote to Chancellor Block to “firmly advise UCLA to refrain from intervening against the planned NSJP conference and to take extraordinary measure to protect attendees.”<sup>11</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, External organizations like the US Palestinian Community Network, The American Arab Anti-discrimination Committee, Jewish Voice for Peace, etc, have all come out in support of SJP at UCLA hosting the National Students for Justice in Palestine conference;

**WHEREAS**, The Vice Chancellor wrote to the ACLU of Southern California stating that NSJP has complied with his request to remove the UCLA name from their conference logo and have committed to include ‘at’ or will otherwise clearly indicate the reference to UCLA as the place in which the event is being held;

**LET IT BE RESOLVED**, The Undergraduate Student Association council of UCLA recognizes and condemns the threats and harm that students have faced from external forces for expressing their protected constitutional rights.

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, The Undergraduate Student Association council of UCLA condemns the use of watchlists that exist to put student organizers under constant surveillance, limiting their comfortability and safety to organize.

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, The Undergraduate Student Association council of UCLA supports the decision for SJP at UCLA to remain the host for the upcoming NSJP conference, as confirmed by Gene Block in LA times .<sup>12</sup>

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED** That the USAC commends the pre-existence of a Jewish Caucus within NSJP but recognizes that inclusion of the Jewish community and condemnation of anti-Semitism amongst registered conference attendees must be ongoing;

**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED** That the USAC denounces the resolution passed unanimously by the Los Angeles City Council as it sought to pressure UCLA administration to infringe on the rights of student groups registered under the Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement office at UCLA and employed gross generalizations<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Letter from concerned students and faculty on allegations of anti-Semitism against NSJP, [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSddXPrck8TkWHyxKQ444\\_gdyneNtXiyabRNmWALqJ\\_7oYbIBg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSddXPrck8TkWHyxKQ444_gdyneNtXiyabRNmWALqJ_7oYbIBg/viewform)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-block-ucla-students-for-justice-in-palestine-conference-20181112-story.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.thefire.org/los-angeles-city-council-resolution-on-sjp-conference-at-ucla-november-6-2018/>

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**LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, Copies of this resolution shall be sent to: the office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Dean For Students, and Chancellor Gene Block.

**LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED**, The Undergraduate Student Association council of UCLA denounces the perpetuation of any and all oppressions that dehumanize student identities, including but not limited to Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, etc.

Resolution passed 11/13/18