

# 119\* Organizations Urge Investigation of UC Santa Cruz Department

January 18, 2024

SENT VIA EMAIL

*\*Original letter was 115. Updated to 119 organizational signatories.*

Dear University of California Regents, President Drake, and Attorney General Bonta:

We are 119 education, civil rights and religious organizations, who are deeply concerned about the relentless promotion of anti-Zionist propaganda and activism by the Critical Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES) department at UC Santa Cruz, that appears to be in flagrant violation of UC policy and California law.

As documented in the detailed [report](#) you received, “Anti-Zionist Advocacy and Activism of the Critical Race and Ethnic Studies Department at University of California Santa Cruz,” in numerous official statements, sponsored events and web postings, CRES has committed itself, as a department and as a core element of its discipline, to anti-Zionist political advocacy and activism to undermine and ultimately dismantle the Jewish state.

For example, in May 2021, CRES pledged departmental allegiance to “the struggle for Palestinian liberation” and committed its faculty to bringing the academic boycott of Israel (the academic arm of the antisemitic BDS movement) onto campus and into their classrooms. More recent incidents include blaming Israel for the October 7<sup>th</sup> Hamas massacre of Israeli civilians and calling Israel’s defensive measures a “genocide”; incorporating anti-Zionist propaganda, including clear falsehoods, into their teaching and teacher training programs; shutting down their department as part of a “Global General Strike” against Israel and calling for students to boycott their classes; and promoting and participating in the “Shut It Down for Palestine” protest rally of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) that illegally blocked access to the campus. Even after a clear warning from the UCSC Provost highlighting UC policies prohibiting political advocacy and activism “in the classroom and other instructional spaces,” CRES faculty doubled-down on their political activities, recently announcing on their university website the launch of Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FJP), a group designed to serve as the faculty-arm of SJP.

While CRES’s substitution of political indoctrination and activism for scholarship and education ultimately hurts everyone in the academic community, we are especially concerned about its deleterious impact on the campus community’s Jewish members. Against the backdrop of an [explosion](#) of campus antisemitism since Hamas’ massacre of Israeli civilians on October 7<sup>th</sup>, CRES’s behavior gives academic legitimacy to virulent antisemitism and can’t help but contribute to a hostile environment for Jewish students, faculty and staff at UCSC.

Furthermore, given CRES's new teacher certification program and the aggressive efforts of CRES faculty to develop the state-wide standard for teaching ethnic studies in required high school courses, CRES's anti-Zionist approach to the discipline - and the antisemitism it will inevitably incite – are likely to spread to K-12 classrooms throughout the state.

Recent [statements](#) by government officials and UC leaders acknowledge that faculty who use their university positions and public resources to promote anti-Zionist propaganda and activism are responsible for inciting campus antisemitism, and they recognize that such behavior violates University regulations and the law, and must be stopped. In a letter to the leaders of California's public universities and colleges, Governor Newsom remarked, "Antisemitism globally and at home has proliferated at a shocking speed and scale. And some faculty have inflamed the discourse with violent rhetoric...This is unacceptable and demands action." In response to the "explosion of antisemitism" on California campuses in the wake of the October 7th massacre, the CA Legislative Jewish Caucus released a statement expressing that its members were "deeply troubled by reports of UC and CSU faculty egregiously abusing their authority...to amplify antisemitic and anti-Israel propaganda," concluding, "In light of these abuses, the UC and CSU systems must take immediate action to protect Jewish students." And at the latest meeting of the UC Board of Regents, UC Regents Chair Leib recounted hearing from many Jewish students who "believe their rights have been violated by episodes of academic abuse...in violation of the faculty code of conduct and our University policies," emphasizing, "that is not OK."

**These statements are a good first step. But to prevent further erosion of public confidence in the University, they must be followed by concrete action.**

The abundant evidence that UCSC's Critical Race and Ethnic Studies department has violated UC policy and the law suggests one such action: **an immediate and thorough investigation of the department, with punitive action taken for all violations.**

Thank you for considering our concerns and for your leadership in these challenging times,

A Time to Stand  
Academic Council for Israel  
AJC Los Angeles  
AJC San Diego  
AJC San Francisco  
Alliance for Constructive Ethnic Studies  
Alliance of Blacks and Jews  
Alums for Campus Fairness - National  
Alums for Campus Fairness - Tufts  
Alums for Campus Fairness - UC Davis  
Alums for Campus Fairness - UC Riverside  
Amariah  
AMCHA Initiative

America Israel Cooperative Enterprise  
American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists  
American Council of Trustees and Alumni  
American Jewish Congress  
American Russian-Speaking Jews Alliance  
Americans Against Antisemitism  
Americans Fighting Antisemitism  
Americans for Peace and Tolerance  
Association of Jewish Educators  
Atlanta Israel Coalition  
B'nai B'rith International  
Binghamton University Zionist Organization (BUZO)  
BIPACT (Bipartisan Action Against Antisemitism)  
Bnai Zion Foundation  
Boston Israel Action Committee  
Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law  
Bulldogs for Israel (Brooklyn College)  
California Association of Scholars  
Californians for Equal Rights  
CAMERA Education Institute  
CAMERA on Campus  
CAMERA's Partnership of Christians and Jews  
Campus Anti-Semitism Task Force of the North Shore  
Christians and Jews United for Israel  
Club Z  
Coalition for Jewish Values  
Coalition of Hindus of North America  
Combat Anti-Semitism Movement  
Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (CAMERA)  
Creative Community for Peace  
Davis Faculty for Israel  
Eagles Wings  
Education Without Indoctrination  
Educators Caucus for Israel (UTLA)  
EndJewHatred  
Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET)  
Facts and Logic About the Middle East (FLAME)  
FAIR Education Santa Barbara  
Fight Back Now  
Fuel for Truth  
Grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors

Hillel at Davis and Sacramento  
Hillel of Silicon Valley  
Inland and Desert Hillel  
Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel  
Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism  
Iranian American Jewish Federation  
Iranian Jewish Women's Organization  
Israel Committee of Santa Barbara  
Israel in NYC  
Israel Matters  
Israel Peace Initiative (IPI)  
Israeli-American Civic Action Network  
Israeli-American Civic Education Institute  
JAM  
Jerusalem Education Fund  
Jewish Affairs Caucus of the National Education Association  
Jewish American Affairs Committee of Indiana  
Jewish Institute for Liberal Values  
Jewish Studies Zionist Network  
Jewish TV Channel  
Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa (JIMENA)  
LatinX for Quality Education  
Liberate Art  
Legal Insurrection Foundation  
Middle East Forum  
Middle East Political and Information Network (MEPIN)  
National Association of Scholars  
National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel  
New Zionist Congress at NYU  
NH4Israel  
North Carolina Coalition for Israel  
PeerK12  
Persian American Civic Action Network (PACAN)  
Proclaiming Justice to the Nations  
Psychologists Against Antisemitism  
Rabbinical Alliance of America  
Rhode Island Coalition for Israel  
Russian Jewish Community Foundation  
Scholars for Peace in the Middle East  
Simon Wiesenthal Center  
StandWithUs

StandWithUs Center for Combating Antisemitism  
StandWithUs Saidoff Legal Department  
Stop Anti-Semitism Now  
Stop BDS on Campus  
StopAntisemitism  
Students Supporting Israel at Hofstra University  
Students Supporting Israel at University of California Santa Barbara  
Students Supporting Israel at University of Central Florida  
Students Supporting Israel National  
Students Supporting Israel of Santa Monica College  
Students, Alumni, and Faculty for Equality on Campus (S.A.F.E Campus)  
Swarthmore Alumni Against Antisemitism on Campus  
The Daniel Pearl Foundation  
The Deborah Project  
The Israel Christian Nexus  
The Lawfare Project  
The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America  
Unified Jewish Voices  
World Jewish Congress North America  
Young Israel of Century City  
Young Israel of Orange County  
Zachor Legal Institute  
Zion Academy of Music and Arts  
Zionist Organization of America

CC:

UC Chancellors  
UC General Counsel  
Chair of UC Academic Senate James Steintrager  
Vice Chair of UC Academic Senate Steven Cheung  
Governor of California Gavin Newsom  
California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis  
California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond  
California Legislative Jewish Caucus