



UC SANTA CRUZ FACULTY ASSOCIATION
Council of University of California Faculty Associations
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November 22, 2015

Dear Chancellor Blumenthal,

The members of the Executive Board of the Santa Cruz Faculty Association wish to express their alarm and dismay over your email message of November 19, 2015, with the subject line “Campus civility in the midst of turmoil.” We believe your call sets a very poor example and low bar for campus conversations about political controversies. We are especially concerned about your implication that, somehow, there are expressions of “hatred” on campus that might result in “unimaginable acts of violence.” So far as any of us is aware, there have been no such expressions at UCSC, and no turmoil, either.

You then deplore the Student Union Assembly’s vote to reinstate a resolution urging UC divestment from Israel, and express concern that it “will have a chilling effect on individuals within our campus community,” and “create an environment in which some of our Jewish students feel alienated.” In making this connection, you imply that opposition to Israel’s policies in the Occupied Territories equate to anti-Semitism, a carnard that has been perpetrated across the United States and Europe, with no justification whatsoever. This, we would suggest, is an example of the very incivility you fear, an action akin to Red-baiting in the 1950s and the current Presidential campaign.

Finally, as the message from the SUA President points out, the resolution calls for divestment *only* from the Israeli military and, presumably, any companies and industries that provide equipment and/or technology to the Israeli armed forces. This is far from calling for complete divestment.

You are, of course, free to convene the Chancellor’s Diversity Advisory Council to discuss “the climate for Jewish students on campus.” We would not wish to suppress your or the Council’s free speech rights or academic freedom in this regard. But students are not the enemy and the Administration would do well to remember this.

Yours sincerely,

Chair, Santa Cruz Faculty Association, on behalf of the SCFA Executive Board:
Karen Bassi, Hunter Bivens, Ben Carson, Chris Connery, Cindy Cruz, Deborah Gould, Vanita Seth