

RESPONSE FROM UC BERKELEY ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR DON MOGULOF REGARDING DR. HATEM BAZIAN'S SEPTEMBER 23rd "INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION"

From: Dan Mogulof <dmogulof@berkeley.edu>

Subject: Your Letter to Chancellor Dirks

Date: September 5, 2014 at 11:28:13 AM PDT

To: tammi@amchainitiative.org

Dear Dr. Benjamin,

Thank you for your note and your concern about student safety on the UC Berkeley campus.

We want to assure you that nothing comes before the security and well-being of our students, and every other person on this campus. Beyond that, this university's community has consistently provided broad support for our efforts to foster and sustain a campus climate where equity and inclusion are fundamental values, and where all of our students, no matter who they are or what they believe, feel safe, welcome and respected. In fact, this year, in the context of the 50th anniversary of the Free Speech Movement, we have placed particular emphasis on communitarian values and the importance of civility. We have not and will never condone threatening or violent behavior from any member of the community, regardless of whether they are students, staff, faculty or visitors to the campus.

On this campus we have found that it requires a highly proactive stance to support and sustain those values and commitments. So, while we never assume that any of our students will act in a violent or threatening manner, we are not complacent. Even before this semester began we required every new student to participate in a new program designed to foster civility, tolerance and respect. Beyond that, our Dean of Students has reached out to every single one of our twenty two student groups that have some sort of connection to the Middle East. In his discussions with the members of these organizations he will be stressing the importance of our [Principles of Community](#), ensure they know where to turn with questions, or in the event they witness or experience threatening deeds or words. We will also continue to facilitate civil dialog on campus and provide support for efforts like The Olive Tree Initiative, a student-led endeavor that is fostering dialogue and discussion here on campus and in the Middle East.

In addition, the university's Protest Response Team works closely with the University of California Police Department when it comes to planning for, monitoring and responding to demonstrations of every sort. They are aware of the plans for September 23, and we can assure you that this event will be treated in the exact same manner as any other demonstration, without regard for its perspectives or participants: We will proactively engage with individuals and organizations connected to the issue and the event prior to the scheduled date. We will reiterate the need for and benefits of civility. We will remind all potentially interested parties of campus policies and the potential consequences if law or policy is violated. We will closely monitor the event, and be fully ready to respond, if necessary.

We also want to make clear what should be obvious: The policies and practices of this university are determined by the Regents, the President, the Academic Senate and/or the Chancellor. At the same time we believe that members of our campus community have a right to their own political and ideological perspectives. In this context Chancellor Dirks has made clear his unwillingness to support divestment or the targeting of a single nation or state in the context of a complex Middle East conflict. By the same token, the chancellor has previously expressed his conviction that the attempt to impose an academic boycott on Israel is a regrettable step that subverts academic freedom. Any limit on the open exchange of knowledge and ideas stands in direct opposition to the scholarly values and goals we uphold as an institution. Ultimately, we believe that engaging in dialogue on these difficult issues is the best hope that we have for achieving peace. It is the path that we hope world leaders will follow and our students, faculty and staff will emulate.

As a public university, among our most fundamental purposes are the contributions we make to our collective intellectual and moral well-being, and the extent to which we prepare all of our students to fully engage in a world defined by differences and diversity. We will continue to do what is necessary to create on this campus an environment that can serve as a model for the sort of society we are striving to build.

We trust you will convey this message to the 15 organizations that you spoke for in your letter.

Sincerely,

Dan Mogulof
Assistant Vice Chancellor
Office of Public Affairs and Communications
UC Berkeley