



# CSU Ethnic Studies Statement for Palestine.

## *Statement*

As CSU Ethnic Studies community (faculty, students, alumni, and staff) we are demanding an immediate halt to the ongoing Zionist genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. As a collective whose field of specialization was forged as a direct result of the 1968 SF Student strike, led by the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front, we cannot be silent in the face of this injustice. We must speak up against this relentless Israeli assault against Palestinian life and the broader structures of colonialism and imperialism that enabled and emboldened Israel's bloody impunity against the Palestinian people.

Ethnic Studies emerged as a field to specifically challenge and undermine systemic structures of power and oppression against Indigenous, Black, Asian, Latinx and other peoples and movements. Its history is inextricably linked with decolonizing the curriculum and holding the university accountable to our communities. This academic focus was intricately tied to the self-determination of oppressed communities, Indigenous sovereignty, opposition to the imperialist Vietnam War and the racial capitalism of colonial violence in the Third World. As such, Palestine has always been part and parcel of this history and the unwavering commitment to the liberation of all Indigenous people, enunciated by the 1968 student strikers. Opposition to Zionist settler colonialism and solidarity with the Palestinian and Arab people for liberation and freedom were never divorced from this principled politics. Honoring the Spirit of '68 legacy means standing firm and unambiguously for justice in/for Palestine as part and parcel of the indivisibility of justice. Based on our origins, trajectory and principles, we reaffirm our stand with the Palestine liberation struggle and our commitment to speak out against the 75 years of Western imperialist backed Israeli settler-colonial violence over Palestinian land and people.

As of this writing, at least 500 Palestinians were [murdered](#) by an Israeli air strike on Gaza's Anglican Episcopal Al-Ahly hospital. Dr. Ghassan Abu Sitta, a former physician at the American University of Beirut Hospital who [immediately moved to Gaza in response to the health emergency](#), described how the hospital's ceiling caved in in the operating room



during the bombardment, [calling](#) it a “massacre.” As of the initial writing of this statement, Dr. Ashraf Al-Qudra, spokesman for the Gaza Ministry of Health, [reported](#) that 2,778 Palestinians have already been killed and 9,938 were injured by Israeli attacks, and estimates that over 1,200 Palestinians, including 500 children, remain missing under the rubble of bombardment and inability of rescue crews to dig them out. These numbers have since [climbed](#) to close to 3,500. The reality of Gaza today is the inevitable outcome of the failure of the international community, and the direct intervention of Western powers, headed by the United States, to deny Palestinian people’s humanity and dignity.

We join millions in the global community to unequivocally condemn Israel’s license to kill and [deliberately](#) and brazenly carry out genocidal military assaults on Gaza. We join with other academics, academic institutions and writers, artists and other public intellectuals who have issued principled statements of their own, including the [UC Ethnic Studies Faculty Council](#) in response to the [Union of Faculty and Staff at the Palestinian Birzeit University](#). Our colleagues in Palestine are calling for us to be counted. Our response will be registered in history. We therefore reject the university institutional complicity with Israeli colonial violence and genocide and support a commitment to BDS, including the [academic boycott](#). As Archbishop Desmond Tutu [remarked](#):

“Those who turn a blind eye to injustice actually perpetuate injustice. If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

While the intensive Zionist smearing and bullying has produced a chilling effect that silenced many of our colleagues, we are presented with another opportunity today to once and for all come together in a unified voice to speak up and collectively reject oppression, colonial violence and racism against all our people. We have a responsibility and a duty: as educators and scholars of Ethnic Studies, we are tasked with the praxis of anti-hegemonic pedagogy and scholarship and the refusal to be seduced by the falsehood of “two-sides” that only reinforces dehumanizing logics such as Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian, and anti-Arab racism. As the soul of Ethnic Studies has always made clear, there is only one side to genocide and colonization. We are committed to challenging the systemic oppression Palestinians face under Israeli settler-colonialism and here in the U.S. We will not be intimidated into hiding or silence.

We call on the CSU Chancellor’s Office, Board of Trustees, and our individual campuses to support for Palestinian life, dignity and freedom by demanding an immediate end to the Israeli assault on Gaza, unequivocally support the mobilizations and actions of Palestinian student organizations on their campuses, meaningfully uplift Palestinian scholars, and scholarship that centers the anti-colonial dimension of the Palestinian struggle to freedom, liberation, dignity, return and peace.

We ask our administrations to:

1. Implement and support programs that intellectually approach Palestine, Arab and Muslim American Studies through a critical Ethnic Studies framework such as the Arab, Muslim, Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies Program at San Francisco



State University and build similar programs at every CSU campus, with meaningful institutional support in creating multiple tenure-track faculty lines at each campus.

2. Stop and condemn institutional adoption of measures such as the IHRA definition of antisemitism, which falsely and dangerously equate support for Palestine and criticism of Israeli colonialism, racism and Apartheid with antisemitism.
3. Unequivocally express support for student and faculty rights to speak out, research and teach about Palestine in an atmosphere completely free from doxxing, harassment and criminalization through false charges of terrorism and antisemitism.
4. Support calls for BDS and divesting from all corporations that profit from the Israeli occupation and all war and destruction projects.
5. Boycott Israeli academic institutions that participate in colonization, racism, apartheid and the ongoing displacement of Palestinian people.
6. Suspend all Israel study abroad programs and enable Palestine study abroad.

naomi@amchainitiative.org [Switch account](#)



\* Indicates required question

Email \*

Your email



Full Name (last, First) \*

Your answer



## My connection to Ethnic Studies \*

- ☐ Faculty member
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Alumni from an Ethnic Studies Department or Program
- ☐ 1968 Student Strike
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Retired

## Department/Program \*

Your answer

## College/Campus \*

Your answer

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