
To: Chancellor Howard Gillman
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor Hal Stern
Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs Willie Banks
Associate Vice Chancellor, Student Life & Leadership & Dean of Students Rameen Talesh

CC: Associate Chancellor & Chief of Staff Lars Walton
Associate Provost & Chief of Staff Kate Brigman
Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Dyonne Bergeron
Assistant Vice Chancellor & Chief of Staff Edgar Dormitorio
Associate Dean of Students & Executive Director, Student Government Student Media Stephanie N. Van Ginkel
Professor, School of Law and Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) Chair Katie Tinto

Subject: On the Hyper-Policing of UCLA and Its Implications for UCI

Dear Chancellor Gillman, Provost Stern, Vice Chancellor Banks, and Dean Talesh,

We write to you today with heightened concerns regarding the hyper-policing that started today at 6 pm at UCLA during the militarized sweep of their campus' encampment for Gaza. This sweep occurred following their police department's failure to protect students from external aggressors — including for at least three hours overnight on April 30th. We believe that the actions taken by UCLA administrators against their own peacefully protesting Bruins will send significantly detrimental shockwaves throughout the UC system and inevitably lead to greater retaliation against our own Anteater family.

We write to you today to urge the university not to follow in the footsteps of UCLA, and instead commit to facilitating free speech on our campus in a safe and conducive manner that does not rely on hyper-policing peacefully protesting students. Additionally, recognizing the cascading impact UCLA's actions will have on the UC system, we further urge you as UCI administrators to reach out to Chancellor Gene Block and other UCLA administrators, to call on them to immediately de-escalate their raid on peacefully protesting students.

As we have indicated time and time again, our primary concern lies with the fact that excessive applications of police violence towards students only serves to exacerbate the conditions you as administrators seek to ameliorate. At Columbia, UCLA, and other campuses, we have seen the police utilized to antagonize student protestors while simultaneously not effectively engaging with off-campus individuals acting in bad faith who pose a genuine threat to students. The usage of the police in this manner has signaled to

This statement is the express view of the Presidents and does not reflect the official position of AGS and ASUCI.

students across the nation that officers are there to harm, not protect. These actions have furthermore encouraged a wide range of non-UC affiliated individuals to come to our campuses. As we watch the police on the scene at UCLA prepare to once again raid peacefully protesting students in the name of "order," there are questions we must ask ourselves. At what point do we acknowledge that excessive violence against our students is counterproductive to fostering a safe and inclusive campus environment? At what point do we acknowledge that the police at UCLA have been disproportionately enacting violence on those they swore to protect, rather than those acting in bad faith? At what point do we acknowledge that the approach being taken by UCLA directly contravenes the core values of our institution?

We are additionally concerned that these actions are being taken right as prospective students are making their final decisions about where to dedicate the next major step of their lives to. While we believe in the promise of UCI to offer a brilliant future to all students, including our students from historically marginalized communities, in the context of historical background and current events, we cannot confidently assert such at this time. In recognizing that hyper-policing on our campus runs directly counter to our foundational mission as an institution, we understand that prospective students from marginalized communities may be deterred from enrolling in a university system that has actively silenced the voices of students. Policing has never been an appropriate solution to student demonstrations and dissent - now is the time for us as UCI to make this abundantly clear for our current and prospective Anteaters, and stand by the principles of free speech we've consistently espoused.

As always, we are heartened by the shift on our campus away from significant hyper-policing towards peaceful and productive dialogues. We strongly encourage you to maintain this practice moving forward — currently, the protests on our campus have shown the possibility for meaningful engagement, and we believe UCI can continue to model an alternative path. However, in modeling this alternative path, we also hope UCI will lead the UC system in developing safe and inclusive campus environments across the University. With the LAPD set to sweep the UCLA encampment between 1 am to 6 am, we ask that you urge UCLA to adopt a similar path as well. As members and leaders of the UC community, we stand in solidarity with our peers at UCLA and hope you do the same.

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Sincerely,
Zoë Chaetana Miller-Vedam & Jun Jang
Presidents, 2023-2024
Associated Graduate Students & Associated Students of UCI