



**How & Why UCI Targets Students Organizing
for a Free Palestine**



UCI CENSORSHIP TIMELINE

THEY TRIED TO BURY US, THEY DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE SEEDS



1948-2000:
Nakba, the First Intifada, and Israeli Sabotages of Negotiation

2000s:
Academic Anti-Zionism & The Zionist Lobby at UCI

2011-2016: Building Zionist Infrastructure at UCI

Under HOWARD GILLMAN's new leadership, UCI Office of Inclusive Excellence and Center for Free Speech collaborated with ADL to increase campus surveillance on pro-Palestine students. Multiple partnerships were also set up during this time with various Israeli institutions and Zionist donors/NGOs in the name of promoting education and research.

2017: SJP attacked

During UCI's then-annual Anti-Zionism Week (AZW), students handed out informational flyers and put up a "Mock Wall" raising awareness about the apartheid wall surrounding Palestinian towns and villages. A group of self-identified Israeli soldiers, the Reservists On Duty, came to UCI and spent the following days surveilling, harassing, and assaulting students. The targeted students later addressed the soldiers peacefully during a Q&A session. The soldiers' camerawoman, in an attack witnessed by campus administration and by legal observers, lunged at the students, shoved a student, and harassed them. Instead of removing her from the event, a UCI administrator encouraged her to file a police report against the students she had attacked. Despite the complaints filed due to UCI's lackluster response and inability to protect their own students from violence, UCI's investigation was limited. SJP members and allies were doxxed.

2023:
Baseless Conduct Charges against Pro-Palestine Students

2000-2006:
The Second Intifada & Israel's War on Gaza

2010:
The Irvine 11 Case
Eleven pro-Palestinian students disrupted a speech at UC Irvine by war criminal and then-Zionist ambassador Michael Oren. These students were arrested and charged with two misdemeanor counts. Notably, UCI took no action in previous cases where students disrupted speeches to silence speakers calling for a free Palestine.

2016: SJP Targeted

SJP and several other student groups protested Students Supporting Israel's film screening of "Beneath the Helmet", a documentary about five Israeli soldiers. As a result, UCI looked into banning SJP from campus, and some members faced possible criminal charges.

2018: SJP Put On Probation

Despite hundreds of complaints filed by students in response to administration's failure to protect SJP and their allies from harassment, UCI put SJP on probation for two years, citing AZW's rhetoric as hate speech and a threat to free speech on campus. In the same year, Palestine Legal addressed UCI in a letter describing the chilling impact of years of unaddressed discrimination against students who advocate for Palestinian freedom and urged administrators to take action to protect the rights of their students.

Israel, Israel, you can't hide!

On November 14, UCI held a campus event titled "The Israel-Hamas War: Five Week Update," featuring Alon Burstein, a visiting professor in UCI Political Science via the Israel Institute. The event utilized alarming rhetoric, claiming neutrality even as Burstein employed Zionist propaganda, which normalizes and legitimizes the Israeli settler state and its genocidal campaign against Palestinians.

When the Q&A portion began, a Jewish graduate student, Margaret G, stood up to read a brief statement intended to contextualize her question and assert her position. Other students at the talk also in support of Palestine held up a banner that read, "IT'S NOT THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR, IT'S GENOCIDE," which included the names of over 2,500 martyred Palestinian children, while others distributed informational fliers.

Zionist attendees at this event, which included faculty and community members, were incredibly hostile towards these students. Margaret barely had the chance to identify herself as a descendant of Holocaust survivors before the crowd began aggressively yelling over her response, verbally assaulting her and other individuals there in support of Palestine. One student was spit at while distributing an informational flier and was later physically pushed out of the room. Within a few minutes, the police were called on the pro-Palestine students. As the students filed out, the Zionist attendees in the audience chanted and berated them.

Margaret is now being charged with the following Student Conduct Violations: (1) 102.15 Disturbance of Peace; (2) 102.14 Disorderly/Lewd Conduct; (3) 102.13 Disruption ("Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures, or other University activities.")

Additionally, five individual board members of UCI's SJP are being charged with six violations for two different cases. The first case being the November 9th National Shut It Down for Palestine Student Walkout, when SJP and 16 other organizations held a rally. UCI alleges that these individuals violated the following Student Conduct Policies: (1) 102.16 Failure to identify oneself to, or comply with the directions of, a University official while on University property; or resisting or obstructing such University officials in the performance of their duties; (2) 102.14 Disorderly/Lewd Conduct; (3) 102.13 Disruption.

The second case being the aforementioned talk held by Alon Burstein. It should be noted that SJP in and of itself did not organize this disruption, nor did it organize for members to attend the event. Any SJP members in attendance were there of their own accord. UCI is accusing these students of violating (1) 102.16 Disturbance of Peace; (2) 102.14 Disorderly/Lewd Conduct; and (3) 102.13 Disruption.

As our timeline makes clear, UCI has a long history of punishing SJP and students advocating for a free Palestine, and failing to protect them from emotional and physical harm. The current charges filed against these students are just the latest iteration of UCI's counterinsurgent warfare, an ongoing method of stifling pro-Palestinian organizing on campus.

This university has a vested interest in Zionism!
Time and again, it puts **PROFIT over PEOPLE.**

It takes a lot of **bad actors** with **blood on their hands** to sustain the fearmongering and mercilessness of this institution.

Asaf Ferber, Associate Professor in Mathematics in the School of Physical Sciences, makes his claim to fame as the Zionist who verbally harasses students and then brags about it on Facebook.

Kamran Kalaei, a community member and friend of Ferber's with too much free time, comes running when Ferber calls for backup. His hateful actions, which include yelling, "Go back to Gaza where you will be raped," perpetuate a culture of fear on a campus dedicated to "free speech."

Jeff Kopstein, Professor in Political Science and Director of the Center for Jewish Studies, is a self-proclaimed "social Zionist" with a demonstrated track record of Islamophobia and bigotry. His most recent stunt includes not condemning charges against a peaceful response to an event he hosted that framed Israel's ongoing genocide as simply a war.

Howard Gillman, Chancellor of UCI, created a Free Speech Center on campus and is also in bed with Zionists. He has long allowed Zionism and Islamophobia to fester on campus by implementing one-sided measures of free speech and repressing students who speak out against imperialism, war, and colonialism. He has been outspoken about his support for Kopstein and has been deceitful in mass emails about UC-wide policies.

It's not just these people, though. The university as an institution is aligned with Zionism. As workers are underpaid, laid off, outsourced, and short-staffed, and as students struggle to make ends meet with expensive housing and high tuition costs that continue to climb, UCI actively chooses to not invest in infrastructure that would support its students and workers.

Instead, UCI profits off of our tuition and our labor, then funnels our money into the exploitation of natural resources and the destruction of communities both at home and abroad. Its investment in BlackRock, the world's largest investor in weapons manufacturing, is especially destructive. UCI's relationship with BlackRock enables and supports the manufacturing of weapons, missiles, surveillance technology, and military operations across the world. UCI makes Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people possible.

Today, December 7, marks two months since Israel began its current iteration of aggression, in which 15,900 Palestinians have been murdered (as of the 5th). Not to mention the countless Palestinians who have been massacred in previous instances of Israeli aggression, as well as the slow violence inflicted upon the Palestinian people through Israel's blockade on water, food, and adequate healthcare. UCI isn't committed to its claims of being a progressive institution, nor is it committed to supporting its Palestinian students, Arab students, anti-Zionist Jewish students, Muslim students, and students in solidarity with them. Its ongoing partnerships with Israeli universities, support of the career pipeline from UCI to weapons manufacturers like Raytheon, and intentional targeting of pro-Palestinian students make this clear.

We refuse to let UCI silence students condemning a genocide it financially, militarily, and ideologically funds. Which is why we organize today in solidarity with these students — to make it clear that we have had enough. **Have you?**



We Demand!

1. ALL student charges be dropped against the graduate student and several SJP undergraduates.
2. FREE SPEECH protections on campus for Palestinian students and allies.
3. For activists, organizers, and participants to exercise their RIGHT to protest without fear of harassment.
4. Greater transparency in investigations of UCI affiliates accused of harassment and discrimination.
5. That the University of California DIVEST from war and weapons manufacturing, instead funding students' and workers' basic needs.
6. That UCI complies with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement.



Take Action!

Go to linktr.ee/uci4palestine or scan the QR code to find petitions to sign on, as well as educational resources!



