

Dear UCSB Student,

During the past few days many university sidewalks and several buildings have been defaced with slogans and statements written in chalk and other more permanent media. Some of the messages constitute political endorsements, while others contain offensive, ignorant and hateful statements that target, provoke and divide our community. All of the messages violate campus policies on posting (www.sa.ucsb.edu/regulations/), which prohibit chalking regardless of content, and the damage to at least one campus building constitutes felony vandalism.

The sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia and intolerance contained in these messages are inconsistent with our core values and our commitment to maintain an inclusive and safe learning environment for every member of the UCSB community. These actions undermine our sense of community and our commitment to diversity. Such hateful messages have no place in our university. Our students, staff, and faculty take pride in our collective efforts to create an atmosphere of inclusiveness. These messages degrade and distract our community and isolate those groups who are targeted.

In keeping with university policies that govern the manner and location of postings, regardless of content, we have been removing the recent chalking and graffiti. We realize, however, that they have had a serious impact and they have threatened the sense of belonging for many students, faculty, and staff who have reported their concerns. Reports have been made to the UCSB Police and an investigation is underway to determine those responsible for damages. In the meantime, UCPD has increased nighttime patrols on campus and are reviewing available video footage in areas with damage. We encourage anyone with any information to contact the UCPD. In addition, resources for reporting hate incidents may be found at <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/Hate.aspx> and any future posting violations can be reported to the Office of Student Life and/or Dean of Student Life.

Our learning environment has been diminished by these acts. We invite continued research and learning within the classroom about the need for civil discourse and laws pertaining to legal expression of opinion. Equally important is the right for all students, staff and faculty to work and learn in an environment free from hostility. We want to remind you that there are many resources for support that are available to you, including Residential & Community Living, the Educational Opportunity Program, Associated Students, Graduate Student Association, Undocumented Student Service/Dream Scholars Resource Team, the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, Counseling and Psychological Services, the MultiCultural Center, and Women, Gender and Sexual Equity.

For your reference, UCSB's Principles of Community state clearly: "The community requires the respectful exchange of ideas. People should be passionate about what they believe and how they express that belief, but they must also be civil in both word and deed. This principle is particularly important when a community encompasses people who have different backgrounds, worldviews, etc. This is not about political correctness; it is about basic respect – about how people treat one another, not about what people think or believe."

UCSB's campus policies protect and uphold freedom of speech. These rights also come with the responsibility to engage with one another civilly and respectfully, and in ways that support our community.

Thank you for expressing your concerns about our community, and for working together to support each other during this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Klawunn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret Klawunn

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs