

May 14, 2018

Dear UCSB Student,

Over the past couple of weeks, we have had a number of incidents on campus that have tested the values of our community. We have had controversial speakers, a contentious Associated Students election, and individual acts of intolerance. In some cases, our community showed its best side, but in others, we witnessed narrow-mindedness and bigotry.

Given the collective impact of these incidents, I am writing now to remind you of our commitments to each other, of resources that are available to you as members of the UCSB community, and to remind you of the policies that are in place to protect all of us. UCSB's [Principles of Community](#), our best expectations of each other, include affirming the intrinsic dignity in each of us; cultivating understanding, opposing bigotry, harassment, and discrimination; and making UCSB an inclusive environment in which to live, work, and learn. As new Gauchos you took the [I Heart UCSB pledge](#), which states "I strive to understand and be inclusive of diverse backgrounds, identities, and expressions of all members of the community. I understand my actions impact my community, my peers, and myself".

In order for our campus to promote the freedom of expression that is central to our intellectual freedom, to the discovery of new knowledge, and to our educational mission, some speech that contradicts our values may be legally protected. The only restrictions the UCSB campus is permitted to place on speech are related to the time, place, and manner of an utterance.

As community members, we expect you to take it seriously that just because some demeaning speech may be protected, it is not living up to our highest ideals to engage in it. Additionally, our community does not have to quietly accept speech that is counter to our values. As the "Principles of Community" and the "I Heart UCSB" pledge demonstrate, we can counter uncivil speech by offering contrasting views or simply disengaging from a provocateur. Opposing hateful speech may take many forms and doesn't have to be speech at all. Disengagement can be a form of civil protest in and of itself, and it has the effect of depriving a provocateur of the attention they desire.

Two recent examples provide helpful context for these policies and principles:

Two weeks ago we had two particularly challenging speakers, not members of our community, in front of the library. Because they were legally allowed to speak freely, and despite their views running counter to our Principles of Community, such speech was protected and there was no basis to remove them or stop them from expressing their views. However, we can choose not to give some demonstrators an audience for their hateful rhetoric, and that is ultimately what students did – after listening for a bit, students walked away and once they did, the two speakers left.

During the Associated Students election, memes were distributed that crossed the line from political debate to personal attacks on individuals using racist imagery. These memes are a good example of protected speech that our community has rejected in both our Principles and our Pledge. Students should vigorously debate ideas and proposals, but insulting individuals on the basis of their race or ethnicity (or any other protected category) is uncalled for.

As members of this scholarly community, I invite you to engage with these issues in your classes and in your research.

Resources:

The University of California has an established system for reporting incidents that violate ethical conduct. The UCSB campus uses [EthicsPoint](#) as our reporting mechanism for concerns, including for bias incidents. Reports may be made anonymously, but the University's ability to follow up is increased when the reporting party participates in the process. The EthicsPoint system allows us to collect and track information about incidents that happen on our campus. We follow up when there is sufficient information and determine whether a judicial, criminal, educational, or employee relations response is needed. Reports are reviewed regularly by UCPD and the Dean of Students Office. Additional offices are notified when appropriate. You can also reach out to the [Hate Incident Response Coordinator](#) personally for consultation and support.

When there is a violation of the [Code of Student Conduct](#), the Office of Judicial Affairs can be notified.

Confidential consultation about an incident is available through the [Ombuds Office](#).

For counseling, contact [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

For support, students can reach out to Resident Assistants, Peer Mentors, Advisors, and Deans who are knowledgeable about these issues and the resources.

Thank you to those of you who continue to uphold our Principles of Community and strive to make UCSB a more welcoming and inclusive learning environment. I wish you all a happy and productive rest of the Spring Quarter.

Sincerely,

Margaret Klawunn, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs