



University of California Student Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UC Student Association and UC Graduate and Professional Council Condemn Trump's Executive Orders and Call for Immediate UC and State Responses

January 30, 2025

The University of California Student Association (UCSA) and the University of California Graduate and Professional Council (UCGPC) unequivocally denounce recent executive actions taken by the Trump Administration that attacks our Undocumented and International student communities, threatens freedom of speech on college campuses, violates transgender rights, and halts federal research grants. UCSA and UCGPC collectively represent 300,000 students, comprising all 10 University of California campuses' graduate and undergraduate students.

Our student bodies have been treated as political pawns for too long, leaving many fearful of what is to come. This administration's relentless attacks on Undocumented and International communities contradict the bedrock of our institutions of higher education, where everyone has an equal opportunity to learn and thrive. The threat of ending birthright citizenship, the guidance which now allows ICE and other federal enforcement agencies on public college campuses¹, and the recommendation for a speedy enforcement of deportation

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<https://www.chronicle.com/article/what-some-colleges-say-theyll-do-if-immigration-authorities-come-to-campus>



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policies² creates enormous threats to the safety of students and their families. We oppose these actions in every way and will ensure students are aware of their constitutional rights.

In a direct assault on free speech rights, the Trump administration issued a directive on Wednesday pledging to deport International and undocumented students and staff who engaged in pro-Palestine activism, due to it being claimed as "Anti-Semitic." This inaccurate conflation of Pro-Palestine advocacy with Anti-Semitism sets a scary precedent of censorship for the student community where only certain students are able to participate in free speech. All students, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to condemn federal and administrative policies contributing to the Palestinian genocide and ethnic cleansing. The Trump administration's decision to institutionalize their perspective, by punishing students and staff exercising their First Amendment rights to protest, is a direct threat to the safety and vitality of our campus communities. Students have every right to engage in free speech demonstrations on college campuses, and it is the responsibility of the UC to protect those rights.

Transgender rights have also been the target of Trump executive orders, with executive orders claiming that there are only two genders³. The UC must stand with their trans and non-binary community throughout this blatant disregard of individual's true genders and gender fluidity. "The U.S. Transgender Survey found that 24% of trans adults were harassed while attending college and 16% of

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<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-the-american-people-against-invasion/>

³

<https://www.reuters.com/legal/transgender-inmate-sues-over-trumps-order-curtailing-lgbt-rights-2025-01-27/>



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harassment victims left college because of it.⁴ This victimization felt by students will only continue to grow with federal orders that contribute to the myths of illegitimacy of trans and non-binary identities.

Other decisions to upend federal research grants and funding would have been detrimental to graduate students who contribute to the world class innovation of the University of California. Federal investments in the UC enhance global leadership in health, science, engineering, and technology. Cutting off this funding from higher ed institutions like the UC would halt groundbreaking efforts in these areas and beyond. In light of this announcement, our communities banded together to take legal action against this administration citing constitutional overreach of executive authority. This serves as an example of how we can collectively work together to stand up against abuses of power.

We strongly urge the University of California, specifically the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) and the Regents of the University of California, to pursue legal action against the federal government and the Trump administration's executive orders. We also call on the California Department of Justice to take swift action to combat these executive orders. The UC in the past has filed important lawsuits against federal actions that harm students and the UC Community, such as their lawsuit against the Trump administration when the Trump administration rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.⁵ This lawsuit demonstrated the University of California's dedication to their students and principles of education. It affirmed that the UC would stand by its student community despite the federal threats that are everlooming.

⁴ <https://www.edpost.com/stories/being-trans-in-higher-education>

⁵ <https://universityofcalifornia.edu/sites/default/files/UC-DACA-Complaint.pdf>



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It is vital to take similar legal action immediately towards these executive orders. We urge the University of California and the California Department of Justice to stand united with students, staff, and faculty by responding to these threats to campus community, culture, and safety. All members of the UC community are targeted by these policies, which is why the UC and state government must loudly mobilize. We must all be united in this fight to protect principles of free speech, allow all students to thrive regardless of their immigration status or gender, and stand up for groundbreaking research initiatives.

Sincerely,

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