



May 2, 2024

Education Secretary Miguel Cardona

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Assistant Secretary, Office for Civil Rights, Catherine E. Lhamon

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Education Secretary Cardona and Assistant Secretary Lhamon,

We are writing on behalf of the Los Angeles Area Muslim Community to bring your attention to a matter of grave concern regarding the recent incidents at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the apparent dereliction of responsibility by the UCLA Police and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) in failing to protect the physical safety and First Amendment rights of peaceful student protestors on UCLA's campus.

For the last week, a group of students at UCLA organized a peaceful protest to raise awareness about the ongoing humanitarian crisis and plausible genocide in Gaza. However, on Thursday, May 1st, 2024 around 3 am, outside agitators, reportedly supporting a foreign government, the State of Israel, violently attacked the protestors, resulting in injuries and intimidation. If determined that these agitators have ties to the Israeli government, then this is transnational aggression.

What is particularly troubling is the apparent failure of the UCLA police and LAPD to intervene effectively and protect the safety and constitutional rights of the student protestors. Despite the protestors' nonviolent intentions and their right to peacefully assemble and express dissenting views, they were subjected to physical harm and threats from external aggressors, many of whom are reported to not even have been UCLA students.

This dereliction of duty by law enforcement raises serious questions about the LAPD's commitment to upholding the First Amendment and ensuring the safety of individuals engaged in lawful protest activities. The failure to provide adequate protection not only undermines the rights of protestors but also sets a dangerous precedent that could deter future peaceful demonstrations and free expression.



MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Therefore, we demand that the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights initiate an immediate investigation into the LAPD's handling of the UCLA protest, including:

1. Reviewing the circumstances surrounding the violence and attacks against student protestors including referring the matter to the DOJ's Criminal Division for swift review and prosecution of the individual perpetrators who unleashed a surprise mob attack on the peaceful protestors.
2. Examining the UCLA police and LAPD's response and actions (or lack thereof) in failing to ensure the safety of UCLA students who were attacked and their related First Amendment against these unlawful assaults.
3. Assessing any potential biases or failures in law enforcement's approach to managing protests and ensuring public safety pursuant to their responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, 34 U.S.C. § 10228(c) and §10221(a).
4. Recommending any other corrective measures and accountability mechanisms to prevent similar incidents in the future and uphold constitutional rights.

Law enforcement agencies must uphold their duty to protect the physical safety and constitutional rights of all individuals, especially during peaceful demonstrations and expressions of dissent. The integrity of our democracy depends on safeguarding these fundamental freedoms and holding accountable those responsible for violating them.

We request a meeting to address this incident and the ongoing safety concerns of pro-Palestinian student protestors at UCLA.

We trust that the Department of Justice will take swift and decisive action to address these concerns and uphold the principles of justice, equality, and constitutional rights.

Sincerely,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Salam Al-Marayati,
President, Muslim Public Affairs Council



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

REGION IX
CALIFORNIA

50 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
MAILBOX 1200, ROOM 1545
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 942012

May 8, 2024

Sent via email only to chancellor@ucla.edu

Dr. Gene Block
Chancellor
University of California Los Angeles
Box 951405, 2147 Murphy Hall
Los Angeles, California 90095

Re: Case Number 09-24-2352 – University of California-Los Angeles

Dear Chancellor Block:

On May 2, 2024, the U.S. Department of Education (the Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR) received a complaint against the University of California-Los Angeles (the University). The complaint alleges that the University Police failed to protect the physical safety of pro-Palestinian student protestors when they were protesting peacefully on the University campus, including on May 1, 2024, when counter-protestors, including third parties, violently attacked the protestors, resulting in injuries and intimidation.

OCR enforces Title VI, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7, and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 100, which prohibit discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin (including shared ancestry) in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department. The University is a recipient of federal financial assistance from the Department and must comply with Title VI and the Department's implementing regulations.

OCR will investigate the following issue: whether the University through its University Police responded in a manner consistent with the requirements of Title VI to alleged harassment of students by members of the public and other University students based on national origin (including shared Palestinian and/or Muslim ancestry).

Please understand that opening the issue for investigation under Title VI does not mean that OCR has made a decision about the merits. During the investigation, OCR is neutral; OCR will collect and analyze the relevant evidence from the complainant, the recipient, and other sources, as appropriate. OCR will ensure that its investigation is legally sufficient as required by OCR's [Case Processing Manual \(CPM\) \(July 18, 2022\)](#). You may find additional information in OCR's [Complaint Processing Procedures](#). Individuals who file complaints with OCR may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

OCR may close this case prior to making formal findings of compliance or non-compliance, provided that the circumstances or information gathered establishes an administrative or other basis for resolution in accordance with the CPM. For example, under Section 201(b) of OCR's CPM, if both parties are interested and OCR determines that the individual allegations are appropriate for mediation, the parties may voluntarily resolve these complaint allegations through mediation that OCR will facilitate. Note that in such a case, OCR does not monitor or enforce the agreement reached between the parties.

When appropriate, a complaint may be resolved before the conclusion of an investigation after the recipient expresses an interest to OCR to resolve the complaint. In such cases, OCR obtains a resolution agreement signed by the recipient. This agreement must be aligned with the complaint allegations or the information obtained during the investigation, and it must be consistent with applicable regulations.

To reach an efficient and timely resolution of this matter, OCR is providing an opportunity for the University to present its response to the complaint allegations and to submit supporting documentation. **Within 15 days of the date of this letter**, please provide to OCR the information listed in the attached data request. The regulation implementing Title VI, at 34 C.F.R. §§ 100.6(b) and (c), requires that a recipient of federal financial assistance make available to OCR information that may be necessary for it to determine whether a recipient is in compliance with the regulations it enforces. Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(c) and 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(3)(iii), of the regulation implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, OCR may review personally identifiable records without regard to considerations of privacy or confidentiality. OCR will take all proper precautions to protect the identity of any individuals named in the documents.

Please be advised that the University must not harass, coerce, intimidate, discriminate, or otherwise retaliate against an individual because that individual asserts a right or privilege under a law enforced by OCR or files a complaint, testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding under a law enforced by OCR. If this happens, the individual may file a retaliation complaint against the University with OCR.

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. If OCR receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personally identifiable information that, if released, could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Moon at Jenny.Moon@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Naghmeh Ordikhani
Team Leader

Attachment

