



May 14, 2024

Dear Academic Senate colleagues,

I'm writing to inform the Academic Senate that as per the understanding we reached with the representatives of the UCB Divest Coalition, the protest on and around the Savio Steps of Sproul Hall has now ended and the campus will abide by the commitments it has made, as described in these two documents:

- [Foundation and Endowment related commitments](#) (May 5)
- [Letter to encampment participants](#) (May 14)

I am greatly relieved that we were able to bring this protest to a peaceful end. We stand ready, as always, to also meet with any students from any community who wish to present requests and ideas for institutional action in support of their needs, interests and/or values.

Since the beginning of the encampment on Sproul Plaza I have had four goals: Provide for the physical safety of the campus community. Prevent disruption of campus operations so that students can complete their courses and exams. Enable commencement ceremonies to proceed as planned for the benefit of our graduates, their families, and friends. And avoid any escalation of the situation on our campus.

As Chancellor, my primary responsibility is to make every appropriate effort to avoid violence and conflict that could potentially imperil the safety of all and exacerbate an already challenging situation. We have also learned on our campus, and from others, that the deployment of law enforcement can result in unintended, highly damaging consequences, not just for the protesters, but for all. And so, I remained focused on steps we could take to prevent a profound disruption of university operations and what could be lasting, even irreparable damage to the very foundations of our community.

These principles and priorities take precedence for me over increased enforcement of our time, place, and manner rules, in response to what was largely, with a few notable exceptions, nonviolent political protest that did not significantly disrupt our essential operations – teaching, learning or research.

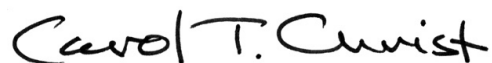
I acknowledge that there are other perspectives regarding how we could or should have responded to this protest. Yet, I believe my stance is consistent with this university's long-standing approach to nonviolent civil disobedience, which has often, in the past, resulted in the campus administration agreeing to requested actions or the exploration of institutional changes that do not violate university existing policies or values.

I am troubled by the number of students, from a wide range of communities, who have told me they do not feel safe on our campus. Our ability to provide every student with a true sense of safety and belonging is contingent on shared respect for diversity of perspective and for each other. I believe we need to redouble our efforts to ensure all of our students feel welcome and included at a public university that must uphold the First Amendment, and in a community where there is strong disagreement about Israel's policies. Disagreements should be based upon an exchange of ideas and not be framed in language that attacks people based upon their identity – antisemitic, anti-Israeli, anti-Palestinian, anti-Zionist, Islamophobic or other identity-based expression.

We are marshaling the university's educational resources to develop new curriculum about civil discourse and new educational programming about antisemitism, Islamophobia and conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people for students, staff, and faculty. And that, I hope, is just the beginning.

I remain deeply concerned about the death and destruction of critical infrastructure in Gaza, and about the ongoing impact on our university and its community. For those reasons, I personally support the efforts of our government to promote a ceasefire, gain the release of hostages, and initiate a process for negotiations that could bring the current conflict to a permanent end.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol T. Christ". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Carol T. Christ
Chancellor