

Zachor Legal Institute Opposes UCLA Hosting Anti-Semitic Students for Justice in Palestine National Conference

UCLA is scheduled to host Students for Justice in Palestine's (SJP) annual conference this month.

SJP has a history at UCLA of demonization of Israel. Earlier this year, a campus event featuring Israel was disrupted by SJP:

http://jewishjournal.com/news/los_angeles/234289/pro-palestinian-protesters-disrupt-ucla-indigenous-peoples-event/.

UCLA, rather than penalizing SJP for their behavior, instead seems to be sending an entirely different message by agreeing to host their annual anti-Semitic get-together.

The Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), when considering violations of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, in August of 2018 announced that they rely upon the State Department's definition of anti-Semitism:

<https://www.state.gov/s/rga/resources/267538.htm> to determine whether discrimination has occurred.

In the State Department's definition, anti-Semitism includes:

- Applying double standards by requiring of it (Israel) a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis

SJP is certainly guilty of each one of these actions defined as anti-Semitic, publically and regularly.

Zachor Legal Institute is involved in holding UCLA to task legally for agreeing to host the SJP national conference in two separate but related areas:

- Allowing the SJP student organization to hold their annual conference on campus, which based upon their previous activities, can be anticipated to showcase an anti-Semitic organized collection of events and discussions.
- Allowing SJP to restrict attendance at this event to sympathizers of the SJP cause. Thus, it will not be possible for unaffiliated students to attend and monitor/report whether anti-Semitic events are occurring at the conference held on the UCLA campus.

As of now, UCLA is responding to the following points above in this way:

- The First Amendment of the Constitution protects Freedom of Speech, and SJP is covered by this.

- Since the conference is funded by SJP itself, not by UCLA funds, attendance does not need to be open to the public.

Both of these points are problematic legally:

- The Supreme Court has ruled in multiple cases that not all speech is protected by the first amendment. The Department of Education has stated that the OCR will aggressively enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity or national origin.
- UCLA will utilize security and other services because this event is being held on campus, so certainly university funds/resources are being used because of this conference. Secondly, it is not clear that even if no university funding is directly going to subsidize the cost of the event, it is legally allowed to restrict attendance by race, religion, or any other criteria.

Zachor continues to investigate UCLA's actions in this regard, monitoring their behavior for unlawful actions. We hope that UCLA will do the right and lawful thing, and stop this conference from taking place on campus or requiring that the event will be open to everyone.

In the absence of these outcomes, Zachor (www.zachorlegal.org) will consider taking legal actions to hold UCLA responsible for violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.