

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
CAMPUS LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEAN OF STUDENTS

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September 22, 2008

Dear Student Leader,

This afternoon every member of the Berkeley community received an email from Chancellor Birgeneau regarding recent incidents of anti-Semitism on our campus. I am now sending this message as a follow-up to his email and would like each of you to share this with students in your community/organization.

The recent acts of vandalism using hate speech on our campus have caused me great unrest and turmoil. I am beyond troubled by the actions of those who would seek to create a hostile environment for Jewish students, staff, faculty and community members. In addition to recent events that occurred last week our campus also witnessed vandalism using racist speech in Cesar Chavez. While the vandalism and hate speech have been directed at specific communities on our campus all of us are affected, and as such all of us have a responsibility to speak out! Our campus is a beacon for free speech and while I will defend the right of any student to raise their voice and express their opinions, ideas and thoughts, I will also use my voice to speak out when such speech demeans and makes unsafe our learning environment.

All of us share the responsibility to create an environment where every member feels physically and psychologically safe. This sense of safety is at the core of social justice. I support this belief and invite all of you to think about your individual and group responsibility for fostering an environment of safety! Discourse, dialogue, discussion, disagreement and agreeing to disagree are all facets of what makes the principles of education real, however, hate, vandalism, intimidation, threats and violence have no place in our community. It is our responsibility to make real our value of inclusion, our value of inquiry and our value of safety for all.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Poullard
Dean of Students