

RESOLUTION of the College of San Mateo Academic Senate to support student success and mental health, to uphold academic freedom in regard to the Gaza crisis, and to affirm the Associated Students of College of San Mateo in their “Stance on the Oppression in Gaza.”¹

WHEREAS the College of San Mateo lists as its first institutional priority², “CSM focuses on teaching and learning, and prioritizes student-focused support, especially relating to antiracism/ equity work that supports access and success for students most in need”;

WHEREAS in May 2024 the Associated Students of the College of San Mateo (ASCSM) issued a “Stance on the Oppression in Gaza” saying, “ASCSM reaffirms our dedication to standing against injustice and oppression in Gaza,” and “We condemn any form of discrimination, racism, Islamophobia, or Antisemitism on the CSM campus and kindly suggest the general community respect each other’s perspectives. We encourage all voices to be heard and welcome all respectful and constructive conversations”;

WHEREAS the Academic Senates and Student Senates of both our sister colleges, Skyline College³ and Cañada College⁴, have already issued statements on this issue;

WHEREAS the CSM Academic Senate has previously issued resolutions in support of student wellness and education in response to global conflicts, such as the 2021 coup in Myanmar⁵, and domestic racism, such as anti-Asian racism⁶;

WHEREAS the San Mateo Community College District’s “Statement on Academic Freedom” asserts that we are “dedicated to maintaining a climate of academic freedom encouraging the sharing and cultivation of a wide variety of viewpoints. Academic freedom expresses our belief in inquiry, informed debate and the search for truth; academic freedom is necessary in order to provide students with a variety of ideas, to encourage them to engage in critical thinking and to help them understand conflicting opinions. Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach, and express ideas, including unpopular or controversial ones, without censorship or political restraint. Academic freedom, rather than being a license to do or say whatever one wishes, requires professional competence, open inquiry and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth. The District’s faculty have the

¹ [ASCSM’s “Stance on the Oppression in Gaza”](#)

² [College of San Mateo Vision, Mission, and Values](#)

³ [Skyline College Palestine Resolution](#)

⁴ [Resolution of the Cañada College Academic Senate to support student success and mental health, to uphold academic freedom in regard to the Israel-Gaza crisis, and to affirm...](#)

⁵ [Resolution Supporting Students Affected by Coup in Myanmar](#)

⁶ [Joint Skyline and CSM Resolution Denouncing Anti-Asian Racism](#)



right to express their informed opinions which relate, directly or indirectly, to their professional activities”⁷;

WHEREAS criticizing the policies of governments and their militaries is a fundamental democratic right⁸, affirmed by the board of the San Mateo Community College District ⁹, and the 2020 Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (JDA)¹⁰, distinguishes such criticism, including “supporting the Palestinian demand for justice and the full grant of their political, national, civil and human rights, as encapsulated in international law” from anti-Semitism, which is “discrimination, prejudice, hostility or violence against Jews as Jews (or Jewish institutions as Jewish)”;

WHEREAS those supporting Palestinians’ rights on other campuses around the country have been met with intimidation and censorship¹¹;

WHEREAS the mental health impacts of conflicts and humanitarian crises are well-documented even beyond the immediate regions affected,¹² and students at CSM have confidentially shared the mental-health impacts of the current conflicts with faculty and staff;

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the College of San Mateo Academic Senate work with the college to develop and offer culturally responsive mental health support services for students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds who have been impacted by the ongoing conflict;

RESOLVED that the-College of San Mateo Academic Senate affirms our commitment to the protection of academic freedom in college environments online and on campus, especially discussion and activism around the current conflict in Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, Iran and surrounding areas;

RESOLVED that the College of San Mateo Academic Senate recognizes the value of diverse perspectives and experiences in enriching our campus community and affirms that, like all our students, Palestinian and Palestinian-American students should have freedom and spaces to express themselves and tell their stories without their identities and ideas being seen as inherently opposed to any other group;

⁷ [Statement on Academic Freedom](#)

⁸ [The Bill of Rights](#)

⁹ [BP 2.31 Speech: Time, Place and Manner](#)

¹⁰ [The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism](#)

¹¹ [Is This the End of Academic Freedom?](#)

¹² [Mental Health During Global Conflict](#)



RESOLVED that the College of San Mateo Academic Senate work with AFT1493 and our sister colleges to protect academic and intellectual freedom including the rights of all faculty, adjunct and full-time, to develop curriculum, educational programming, and resources, and to discuss the current conflict in Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, and Israel when directly or indirectly related to their professional activities such as in the classroom, in office hours, in counseling and library sessions, and at all campus activities, without being subjected to intimidation, censorship, retaliation, or threat of reduction or termination of employment or assignment;

RESOLVED, that the Academic Senate encourage all faculty to reasonably accommodate the academic circumstances of students impacted by this conflict in their classes and support them with measures including but not limited to: extending deadlines on assignments, extending time to complete quizzes and exams, and/or providing a grace period for turning in past-due assignments;

RESOLVED, that the College of San Mateo Academic Senate work with the Office of Equity and other campus interest-holders to expand faculty and staff professional development about anti-racism to include training on trauma-informed conversations and on ways to name and interrupt anti-Semitism and anti-Arab, anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian racism on our campus and in online classes;

RESOLVED, that Academic Senate work with the Office of Planning, Research, Innovation, and Effectiveness (PRIE) to disaggregate SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African) categories from “White Non-Hispanic,” “Black” and “Asian” in success rates, retention rates, and enrollment data, as they are currently described in order to make visible College of San Mateo’s SWANA community, to encourage solidarity and coalition building across students, faculty, and staff, and to promote students’ right to free speech and advocacy around SWANA issues on campus.

Approved by majority vote November 26, 2024

