

September 19, 2016

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF THE DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE (UC BERKELEY)

I fully support and defend the principles and policies of our campus that protect the academic freedom of all members of our community, whether students, faculty staff or visitors, as well as the shared governance of our campus by the administration and faculty Senate.

It is in this spirit that I write in response to the understandable concerns that have been raised regarding the suspension of Ethnic Studies 198: Palestine: A Colonial Settler Analysis.

On Tuesday, September 13, 2016, I made the decision to suspend ES198: Palestine: A Colonial Settler Analysis, until it could be further reviewed. I did so because it became apparent that neither the Chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies, nor I had been made aware formally of this DeCal class offering, nor seen the syllabus.

Immediately following that decision, I met with the Chair of the Ethnic Studies Department, the faculty sponsor and the student facilitator of ES198 to review and discuss the course materials.

The meeting resolved the procedural issues concerning academic review and consultation, but led me to request that the Chair, faculty sponsor and student facilitator, work together to address the following concerns before deciding how to move forward:

1) The Committee on Courses and Instruction Checklist for Departmental Review and approval asks the Department to determine whether "the content of the proposed course is within the scope of your department's academic program" (link to full text here).

[http://vcue.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/deptchair\\_checklist.pdf](http://vcue.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/deptchair_checklist.pdf)

I asked them to clarify how a course focused exclusively on Palestine was consistent with the academic mission of the Department of Ethnic Studies, as opposed to another department or program with expertise in regional area studies.

2) I asked them to assess whether the course description and syllabus had a particular political agenda structured into its framing and weekly assignments in such as way as to limit open inquiry of the issues it engages, and whether it potentially violated the 2007 Regents Policy on Course Content (see link below) and/or the 2015 Regents Principles Against Intolerance ([regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/aar/mare.pdf](http://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/aar/mare.pdf)).

3) I asked them to assess whether the stated objective of the course to "explore the possibilities of a decolonized Palestine" potentially violated Regents Policy by crossing over the line from teaching to political advocacy and organizing and referred them to the 2007 Regents Policy on Course Content. I quote for your reference:

The Regents....are responsible to see that the University remain aloof from politics and never function as an instrument for the advance of partisan interest. Misuse of the classroom by, for example, allowing it to be used for political indoctrination....constitutes misuse of the University as an institution (link to full text here).

<http://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/2301.html>

Let me be clear: Dean's review, but do not approve the academic content of DeCal courses. I did not request or require any revisions of the content of the course. I asked the Department Chair to consult with her colleagues and the student facilitator to provide me with clarifications of the three issues above. It is the responsibility of the Dean

to insure that our academic programs are consistent with University and campus policies and practices.

The Department has now responded to my questions and concerns. The Student Facilitator, the Chair and the Executive Committee of the Department of Ethnic Studies determined that revisions of the course in light of these concerns were necessary and appropriate. It is my understanding that they have posted a revised version of the course description and syllabus.

I am therefore rescinding my suspension of the course.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carla Hesse".

Carla Hesse

Peder Sather Professor of History  
Dean of Social Sciences  
Executive Dean of the College of Letters and Science

cc:

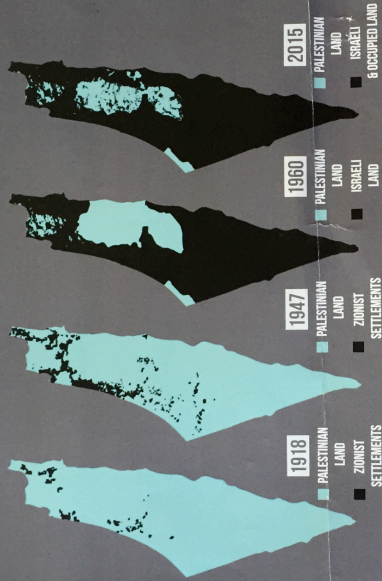
Nicholas B. Dirks, Chancellor

Carol T. Christ, Executive Vice Chancellor

Shari Huhndorf, Chair of the Department of Ethnic Studies

FALL 2016 DECAL

## PALESTINE: A SETTLER COLONIAL ANALYSIS



THIS 1-UNIT LECTURE AND DISCUSSION-BASED DECAL WILL EXAMINE KEY HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN PALESTINE, FROM THE 1880S TO THE PRESENT, THROUGH THE LENS OF SETTLER COLONIALISM. AFTER GAINING A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF SETTLER COLONIALISM, WE WILL ANALYZE ITS CONNECTION TO ZIONISM, TRACING THE HISTORY OF ZIONIST SETTLER COLONIALISM IN PALESTINE. LASTLY, WE WILL EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF A DECOLONIZED PALESTINE. ONE IN WHICH JUSTICE IS REALIZED FOR ALL ITS PEOPLES AND EQUALITY IS NOT MERELY ESPOUSED, BUT PRACTICED.

SEND AN EMAIL TO [PALESTINEDECAL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PALESTINEDECAL@GMAIL.COM) FOR DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

IMAGES ACQUIRED AND ADAPTED FROM VISUALIZINGPALESTINE.ORG