

The CUNY Alliance to Defend Higher Education is outraged by the leadership of the University of California Berkeley's compliance with the demand by the Department of Education (DOE)s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) to release the personal data of faculty, students and staff. Both the request for this information and the University's cooperation represent a shocking escalation of the federal government's dismantling of higher education as well as the perversion of the mission of OCR.

We have multiple concerns:

1. The decision for UC Berkeley to hand over the personal information of members of the university community is a profound violation of privacy and of the trust faculty, students, and staff expect to have in the university.
2. Although the DOE claimed to be investigating "allegations of antisemitic harassment and discrimination," this is clearly a continuation of the Trump administration's bad faith policy of extorting money and information from institutions of higher education on the pretext of punishing antisemitism.
3. UC Berkeley is sullyng the decades-long reputation it has enjoyed as a bastion of academic freedom. Berkeley's prominence as an internationally respected incubator of knowledge proves that cutting-edge research is inextricable from the ability to teach, explore, publish, and speak freely.
4. The DOE and the Trump administration have been increasingly emboldened by their successful bullying of some of our most prestigious universities. Berkeley's collaboration with the administration adds to harassment and persecution of faculty, students, and staff due to their political beliefs, academic expertise, pedagogical approaches, and curricular specializations.

We condemn the actions of UC Berkeley and the silence of the University of California system. And we call upon the City University of New York to resist any such demands from any branch of the federal government and instead engage in every possible legal strategy to challenge them. Finally, we offer our support to our colleagues at the University of California Berkeley, who deserve more of an institution whose motto is "Let There Be Light."

In Solidarity,

CADHE Organizing Committee (in alphabetical order)

Cristina Bruns, LaGuardia Community College

Sarah E. Chinn, Hunter College

Jonathan Cornick, Queensborough Community College

Beth Evans, Brooklyn College

Paul Fess, LaGuardia Community College

Jean Halley, College of Staten Island

Ernest Ialongo, Hostos Community College

Karen Kaplowitz, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Joel Kuszai, Queensborough Community College

Douglas A. Medina, Guttman Community College

Hillary Miller, Queens College

Mojúbàolú Olúfunké Okome, Brooklyn College

Philip A. Pecorino, Queensborough Community College

Larissa Swedell, Queens College

Emily Sohmer Tai, Queensborough Community College

Karen Weingarten, Queens College

Michael W. Yarbrough, John Jay College of Criminal Justice