



To: SACUA

From: Michael Atzmon and Melanie Tanielian, Co-Chairs, Davis, Markert, and Nickerson Academic Freedom Lecture Committee

Subject: Report on Activities of Davis, Markert, and Nickerson Academic Freedom Lecture Committee for 2023-2024

Members:

Samer Ali
Michael Atzmon (Co-Chair)
John Cheney-Lippold
Marcy Epstein
Holly Hughes
Victoria Langland
Melanie Tanielian (Co-Chair)
Nick Tobier (sabbatical for Winter 2024 semester)
Suleyman Uludag

SACUA Liaison:

Damani Partridge

Meeting Dates:

Thurs. 9/28 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 10/26 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 12/14 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 1/18 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 2/22 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 3/21 from 3-4pm
Thurs. 4/18 from 3-4pm

Committee Charge

1. Plan the 2023-2024 DMN lecture and then the 2024-2025 DMN lecture.
2. With the Faculty Senate Office, review the DMN finances and make budgetary recommendations for the 2024-2025 DMN lecture event.

Committee Actions

We held the 2023 lecture with Jonathan Friedman. The FSO did the heavy lifting on organizing the visit. The committee identified a shortlist of topics and potential speakers for Fall 2024 and conducted a vote. Subsequently, Judith Butler of UC Berkeley was invited, and a November 14 date was scheduled. The committee has been making plans for her visit.

Two new events, panel discussions, were organized during Winter 2024. Both were well attended, both in person and virtually:

1) **Academic Freedom and Free Speech: The Palestine Exception.**

Wednesday, February 21st, 4:00pm-6:00pm. ~180 attendees (130 online, 50-60 in-person)

Moderator: Charlotte Karem Albrecht Associate Professor of American Culture and Women's Studies (UM)

Presenters:

Leila Kawar, Associate Professor of American Culture and the Residential College (UM), UM AAUP Chapter "External Harassment and Proactive Strategies for Protecting the Academic Freedom of Faculty"

Ramis Wadood, ACLU of Michigan, "Students' Right to Free Speech and Protest."

Samer Ali, Associate Professor, Middle East Studies (UM), "How Did We Get Here? Structural Factors that Erode Academic Freedom"

2) **The China Initiative and Its Aftermath: The impact on science and the academic and intellectual freedom on campus**

Monday, March 25th, 6-7:30 pm. ~180 attendees (112 online, ~70 in-person)

Moderator: Mary E. Gallagher, Amy and Alan Lowenstein Professor of Democracy, Democratization, and Human Rights at the University of Michigan

Presenters:

Gang Chen, Carl Richard Soderberg Professor of Power Engineering; Director, Pappalardo Micro and Nano Engineering Laboratories, MIT

Ruixue Jia, Associate professor of economics at the School of Global Policy and Strategy, UC San Diego

Ann Chih Lin, Associate Professor of Public Policy; Director, Lieberthal-Rogel Center for Chinese Studies

Peter Zeidenberg, Attorney in Practice, Partner ArentFox Schiff

Recommendations

We recommend holding a panel discussion each Winter Semester on timely topics and expand the charge of the committee to do so. This is an opportunity to work with different units across campus and make sure that co-sponsorships are established.



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Since some prominent speakers schedule events more than a year in advance, the committee has begun discussing potential topics and speakers for Fall 2025. The current committee, plus the incoming members, may conduct a vote during the summer of 2024. If possible, future committees may want to plan the lectures further in advance.