

SACUA Statement on events at the Diag on 28 August 2024

We are alarmed and disheartened by the University administration's aggressive response to peaceful protest on the Diag during Wednesday's Festifall. Our mission as a public university obliges us to cultivate—not suppress—students' ability to practice the arts of citizenship. This includes the right to protest.

Wednesday's protestors were engaging in reasonable, meaningful actions that were meant to draw our attention to the ongoing tragedy in Gaza. In the observation of SACUA members and other faculty who were present at the protest, they were not impeding the movements of other students, and they were obedient to directives given by DPSS.

It was the aggressive tactics of the police—not the actions of the protestors—that resulted in confrontation. Four people were arrested by the police. One of them, a 16 year old, was hospitalized as a result of police tactics. At the time of the police action the protestors were peacefully parading through the campus, in a manner that is intrinsic in any protest.

The Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs deplores the aggressiveness with which DPSS responded to protestors who were peacefully practicing the skills of 'democracy and debate' (which is the theme of the academic year). We call upon President Ono and other responsible administrators to respect and encourage students' capacity for meaningful political activism.

Approved by SACUA: August 30, 2024