



UAW LOCAL 2865

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UAW 2865, University of California Academic Student Employees, Support Professor Rabab Abdulhadi, Campus Advocates for Justice in Palestine, and Academic Freedom at San Francisco State University

As educators, workers, and students of the University of California we are disturbed by recent developments on the SFSU campus:

1) On October 14, 2016, several racist and Islamophobic posters were plastered on the SFSU campus smearing SFSU Professor Rabab Abdulhadi, accusing her of terrorism and anti-Semitism. Posters also targeted student advocates for justice in Palestine. The posters are claimed by both the Canary Mission and Horowitz Freedom Center, a far-right, off campus organization whose founder is named as a leading Islamophobe by the Southern Poverty Law Center. While the office of the President of the university issued a general rejection of this campaign referring to it as "hateful" and its backers as "extremist," the statement did not make any reference to or express defense of the specific targets: Dr. Abdulhadi, the GUPS students, and the "Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas" program.

2) In 2013 Prof. Abdulhadi was encouraged by SFSU to establish a collaborative agreement (an MOU: Memorandum of Understanding) with An-Najah National University in Palestine. SFSU AUCIP (All University Committee on International Programs) unanimously voted in favor of the proposal which was then forwarded to the Provost and to SFSU President Leslie Wong who signed it in Fall 2014. On September 7, 2016, Campus Watch/Middle East Forum, led by Daniel Pipes, launched a campaign demanding an end to SFSU collaboration with An-Najah and smearing Professor Abdulhadi with baseless accusations of terrorism and anti-Semitism. Instead of defending Dr Abdulhadi and standing by the SFSU collaborative agreement with An-Najah, President Wong and CSU Chancellor White issued a statement generally upholding the 110 existing SFSU agreements with international universities without naming An-Najah or Dr. Abdulhadi specifically.

As educators, we are appalled by the affront to academic freedom that such attacks represent against Professor Abdulhadi's right to teach issues related to Palestine and Israel as well as those relating to Arab and Muslim diasporas in the United States. Over the last two years, The AMCHA Initiative, a group that aims to shut down debate on Palestine on university campuses, has baselessly and falsely accused Prof. Abdulhadi as being a collaborator with terrorists because of partnerships she has

organized with Palestinian university professors. The SFSU administration has concluded that these accusations have no merit, yet it has caved to continued pressure from these intimidation groups to conduct a 5-year audit of Prof. Abdulhadi's international travel. These actions give credence to the intimidation groups that want to undermine Dr. Abdulhadi's academic freedom and right to teach issues related to Palestine and Israel. SF State must denounce these efforts and vigorously defend the academic freedom of Dr. Abdulhadi.

We believe that it is the responsibility of SF State leadership to clearly and unambiguously come out in active support of their faculty and categorically express their absolute intolerance of hate speech and defamation. Fortunately, faculty at San Francisco State have not been silent in the face of such bullying, harassment, and incitement to violence. The Jewish Studies Department, the College of Ethnic Studies, and SF State's faculty union the California Faculty Association, have issued statements clearly condemning those posters. Numerous SF State professors have signed this [petition](#) in support of Prof. Abdulhadi and students facing these attacks. Earlier statements that called on President Wong to uphold the agreement with An-Najah National University and stand by Dr. Abdulhadi were issued by the Middle East Studies Association, California Scholars for Academic Freedom, Jewish Voice for Peace, and National Students for Justice in Palestine.

We join these groups and call on SF State to meet all the demands outlined in the faculty [petition](#) mentioned above. These include:

Publicly and unambiguously defend:

1) the academic freedom and the intellectual reputation of our colleague Prof. Abdulhadi, by making a public statement that clears her name of the vicious and absolutely unfounded smear attacks against her, and by doing so to protect the intellectual integrity of SF State and all who work there;

2) the right of free speech of Palestinian students, faculty, and staff, and all advocates for justice in/for Palestine, against the current bullying, harassment and intimidation attacks suffered by members of our community

and, to publicly and unambiguously condemn all forms of hate speech, including anti-Arab racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia, and to take all the necessary actions to stop hate speech on your campus.

These demands are crucial to the principles shared among us as educators.

Sincerely,
UAW 2865 Joint Council