

University Senates Conference 378 Henry Administration Building 506 South Wright Street Urbana, IL 61801

December 27, 2013

We, the chair and vice chair of the University Senates Conference (USC) of the University of Illinois, strongly support the academic freedom of our faculty as well as our colleagues in all academic institutions.

At the heart of our University's statutes resides our unquestionable drive to protect academic freedom as well as the need to avoid all discriminatory practices:

"The commitment of the University of Illinois to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms.

The University of Illinois will not engage in discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran and will comply with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, orders and regulations. This nondiscrimination policy applies to admissions, employment, access to and treatment in University programs and activities" (University of Illinois Statutes, p. i).

Based on these core principles, we strongly encourage all academic institutions to vigorously engage in dialogue, shared scholarly work, and other activities that create knowledge and understanding, instead of any actions that stifle them. Therefore, we concur with and support the Executive Committee of the Association of American Universities in its opposition to a boycott of Israeli academic institutions.

Please feel free to contact Dr. Villegas at (217) 206-7927 (<u>jvill2@uis.edu</u>) or Dr. Chambers at (312) 996 -1294 (<u>donc@uic.edu</u>), if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jorge Villegas, Ph.D.

Chair

University Senates Conference

University of Illinois

Donald A. Chambers, Ph.D.

Vice chair