



## The Graduate Center chapter of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC)

<https://psccunygc.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2023/10/24/resolution-condemning-cuny-administrations-persecution-of-pro-palestine-organizing-and-disregard-for-palestinian-lives/>

On October 13, the executive committee of the Graduate Center chapter passed the following resolution, which was also unanimously endorsed by all chapter stewards who voted. It will be voted on at the November meeting of the PSC-wide Delegate Assembly.

### **Resolution Condemning CUNY Administration’s Persecution of Pro-Palestine Organizing and Disregard for Palestinian Lives**

Whereas in public messages to the university, Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez has falsely ascribed nefarious motives to campus events whose purpose—Palestinian solidarity—he would not deign to identify by name;

Whereas in their outreach to the community, several top administrators have refused to even mention the word “Palestine,” let alone offer support to Palestinian students in light of the Israeli military’s blockade of Gaza and the mass killing of civilians there;

Whereas in doing so, the Chancellor and other senior CUNY administrators have disregarded the suffering of our community members and made a mockery of the free speech commitments they claim to hold;

Whereas the Chancellor’s actions build on the university administration’s long tradition of repressing free speech, as when students demanded an end to CUNY’s racist Jim Crow admissions practices fifty-five years ago, and university senior administrators policed and criminalized protests in a futile effort to maintain the status quo rather than fully integrate the university;

Whereas CUNY’s attacks on pro-Palestine speech and activism mark a cruel parallel to Israel’s internationally condemned apartheid system, as pro-Palestine organizers are themselves subject to a separate and unequal standard;

Whereas in Spring 2023, the Chancellor publicly defamed CUNY Law’s student commencement speaker as engaging in “hate speech” for describing the political reality in Israel and Palestine, bringing harassment and death threats to the commencement speaker and others at CUNY Law, even as multiple civil rights organizations came to the student’s defense;

Whereas at other campuses, administrators have deactivated the university IDs of pro-Palestine organizers and blocked them from campus;

Whereas while countless students, staff, and faculty reel from the past days' tragic violence and the continuing bombardment of Gaza, CUNY administrators cynically pit our communities against one another even as in Israel itself, mainstream commentary has recognized apartheid as the ultimate source of the violence;

Whereas at CUNY, in advance of anti-apartheid rallies planned on multiple campuses, the Chancellor claimed without a shred of evidence that student organizers would “glorify Saturday’s violence and celebrate the killings, injuries and capture of innocent people;”

Whereas at Brooklyn College, where many GC students and faculty teach, President Michelle Anderson banned a rally from campus, informed the community she had “increase[d] campus security,” and encouraged students “not to come to campus,” forcing students to gather on the public sidewalk outside and leaving them vulnerable to the NYPD’s unconstitutional policing practices;

Whereas these messages assert that pro-Palestinian speech is inherently violent—an Islamophobic and anti-Arab dogwhistle—and also serve as a pre-emptive justification for criminalization;

Whereas the CUNY administration’s words and deeds have made common cause with the U.S. far-right, as the administration capitulates to city councilmembers’ demands to repress pro-Palestine speech and echo their characterization of Palestine solidarity as inherently violent;

Let it be resolved that the PSC-GC EC condemns the CUNY administration’s political persecution of Palestinian students, community members, and Palestine solidarity activists in recent days;

And let it be further resolved that the PSC-GC EC condemns the supposed leaders of our institution for lending credence to far-right campaigns to defund and dismantle public education; that senior administrators would help the far-right wield a political cudgel against CUNY’s grassroots organizing efforts is a profound betrayal of their duties to the university community.

And let it be further resolved that the PSC-GC EC demands an end to the repression of free speech and intimidation of organizers, which is a stain on our academic institution.

*Passed* by PSC-GC Executive Committee

*co-signed* by Graduate Center & School of Labor and Urban Studies Stewards