



## the education policy project

April 30, 2026

U.S. Representative Tim Walberg  
Chair, U.S. House Committee on Education and  
Workforce  
2266 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Rep.Walberg@mail.house.gov

The Honorable Linda McMahon  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
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The Honorable Harmeet Dhillon  
Assistant Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division  
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Washington, DC 20530  
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The Honorable Keith Sonderling  
Acting Secretary of Labor  
U.S. Department of Labor  
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### **Re: Call to Investigate University of California's Federally Funded K-12 Pipeline Programs**

Dear Representative Walberg, Secretary McMahon, Acting Secretary Sonderling, and Assistant Attorney General Dhillon,

JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing recognition and rights of the one million Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewish refugees from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and The Education Policy Project are deeply alarmed by the findings in last month's U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce report, "*How Campuses Became Hotbeds: The Rise of Radical Antisemitism on College Campuses.*"<sup>1</sup>

We share Chair Walberg's concern that K-12 students are "in danger"<sup>2</sup> by what is transpiring in our universities and are especially troubled by the work of the federally funded University of California's

<sup>1</sup> U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce, "*How Campuses Became Hotbeds: The Rise of Radical Antisemitism on College Campuses.*" March 2026, <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/kw4w8wuxj9ecwpevss7gp/How-Campuses-Became-Hotbeds-the-Rise-of-Radical-Antisemitism-on-College-Campuses.pdf?rlkey=tsuha6vybakp5oq1xhto1euth&e=6&st=08c027lp&dl=0> and [https://edworkforce.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=413173&utm\\_source](https://edworkforce.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=413173&utm_source)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce, "*Antisemitism in Higher Education: Examining the Role of Faculty, Funding, and Ideology*" video, July 15, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/live/T-R8vkAYek1> ("our K-12 students are in danger next" and "our responsibility at federal level is to make sure that the local schools, K-12, are primarily manned, encouraged,

California Subject Matter Project (CSMP). University faculty participating in CSMP are advising K-12 educators to present selectively framed and politically motivated history that biases students against Jews and beliefs core to their identity such as Zionism, the right to self-determination in Jews' indigenous homeland of Israel.<sup>3</sup>

In June 2026, Governor Newsom is expected to sign the State of California 2026-27 Budget into law; it is slated to provide CSMP and its affiliated program with over \$16 million of federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title II grant funding.

We call upon your Committee and Departments to curb improper use of taxpayer dollars, specifically to investigate CSMP for violating the terms of the federal ESEA grant to CSMP and suspend CSMP's federal funding until misuses identified are corrected.

### **Jews from the Middle East and North Africa**

In the 20th century, nearly one million Jews across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) were subjected to state-sanctioned antisemitism, dispossession, and forced displacement from lands they and their ancestors had lived in continuously for over 2,500 years. At the time, anti-Zionism in the MENA region was deployed as a legal pretext for the official targeting of entire Jewish populations, resulting in ethnic cleansing, arbitrary arrests and detention, property confiscation, executions, and dismantling and dispossession of these communities under the color of law. Adjusted for today's value, Jewish refugees from the region lost an estimated \$262 billion in assets, losses that have been ignored in both academic scholarship and Middle Eastern human rights frameworks.<sup>4</sup>

Today, 10% of American Jews identify as Sephardic and Mizrahi—descendants of MENA communities—and more than half of Israel's Jewish population traces its roots to these dispossessed communities.

For many Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews, the antisemitism that ultimately led to their expulsion and flight from MENA countries was initially experienced in school settings where Jewish children were singled out, stigmatized, and targeted as Jews and Zionists, starting with classroom instruction that quickly spread to school culture. This early antisemitic indoctrination in school was a major contributor to normalizing hostility toward Jews individually and set the stage for the broad societal conditions that enabled the collective persecution and displacement of Jews from the Arab and Muslim world.

The patterns unfolding in higher education today, that the *"How Campuses Became Hotbeds: The Rise of Radical Antisemitism on College Campuses"* (Report) calls out, have the same core element as this historical precedent: educational systems shaping, legitimizing, and transmitting anti-Zionist ideologies and, in turn, antisemitic sentiments and actions.

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directed, guided by and cared for by the state and locals [and as for] institutions...that receive federal dollars, we have an oversight responsibility") (hour 3:25-3:26 and 3:28).

<sup>3</sup> Hoover Institution, Stanford University, *"Jewish Roots in the Land of Israel/Palestine,"* 2024, [https://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/research/docs/Strauss\\_WebreadyPDF.pdf](https://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/research/docs/Strauss_WebreadyPDF.pdf) and Pew Research, *"U.S. Jews' Connections with and Attitudes Toward Israel,"* 2021, [https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/u-s-jews-connections-with-and-attitudes-toward-israel/pf\\_05-11-21\\_jewish-americans-07-2-png/](https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/u-s-jews-connections-with-and-attitudes-toward-israel/pf_05-11-21_jewish-americans-07-2-png/) (83% of Jews believe that Israel is an essential or important part of their identity)

<sup>4</sup> Justice for Jews from Arab Countries, *"Jewish Refugees from Muslim Countries: Historical and Economic Analysis, Executive Summary,"* 2025, <https://justiceforjews.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY-BOOK-FINAL.pdf>

## California Subject Matter Project

We are deeply concerned to see these same patterns in the University of California system, as identified in the Report, now extending into California's K–12 classrooms through the University of California's federally funded California Subject Matter Project (CSMP).<sup>5</sup> As a central mechanism through which university-developed K-12 instructional materials and educator trainings are disseminated to the state's K-12 school teachers, CSMP functions as the main pipeline through which university faculty's politically-motivated ideologies and interpretive frameworks, including anti-Zionism, are transmitted to young students.

CSMP, overseen by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP), operates across multiple campuses and regional sites and provides instructional materials and professional development to approximately 1,000 public school districts serving nearly 6 million students. CSMP functions through nine subject matter projects that host programming at more than 90 regional sites. By 2022, the year for which most recent information is available, CSMP had 40,000 California K-12 educators in its network and had shifted its focus almost exclusively to high school Ethnic Studies. See Appendix A.

In May 2025, UCOP represented to the federal government that the University of California was “entirely focused on strengthening [its] programs ... to root out antisemitism and all forms of discrimination.”<sup>6</sup> At the same time, however, its CSMP leaders acknowledged that their work was raising concerns due to its “politically controversial” nature,<sup>7</sup> in contravention of University of California governance requirements—rooted in the California Constitution—that the University be administered “entirely independent of all political or sectarian influence and kept free therefrom.”<sup>8</sup> As set forth below, many of CSMP's “politically controversial” programs are anti-Israel and anti-Zionist.

Given CSMP's enormous reach and influence, the federal government should enforce federal ESEA grant conditions that require compliance with its nondiscrimination requirements and grant spending be aligned with state academic content standards. CSMP materials on the Middle East and North Africa do not do so, employing instead -- directly and by omission -- a discriminatory and politically contested interpretive framework that erases and misrepresents core aspects of Jewish history, current events, identity, and indigeneity.

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<sup>5</sup> California Subject Matter Project, <https://csmp.online/>

<sup>6</sup> Daily Cal, “Department of Justice hints at antisemitism lawsuit against UC,” May 30, 2025, [https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/departments-of-justice-hints-at-antisemitism-lawsuit-against-uc/article\\_777fb8c9-0f1c-4d20-8c37-737714064dfb.html](https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/departments-of-justice-hints-at-antisemitism-lawsuit-against-uc/article_777fb8c9-0f1c-4d20-8c37-737714064dfb.html)

<sup>7</sup> University of California Office of the President, *California Subject Matter Project (CSMP) In-Person Concurrence Committee Meeting Agenda*, June 4, 2025, Oakland, CA, <https://ucop.app.box.com/s/nvuotzggm5xuzmh9tprazthlis234s0/folder/310465746702> (its attached report is on file with author)

<sup>8</sup> Regents of the University of California, “Bylaw 12: Composition and Powers,” <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/bylaws/bl12.html>

## **Non-Compliance with Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Every Student Succeeds Act)**

California's Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan<sup>9</sup> – California's master ESEA plan approved by the U.S. Department of Education – states that “Title II, Part A funds will be used to support the work of the CSMP, an essential component of California’s professional learning infrastructure,” and that “CSMP activities are designed by university faculty, teacher leaders, and teacher practitioners to improve standards-based instructional practices that lead to increased achievement for all students.”

ESEA bars funding programs which discriminate on the basis of, among other things, religion and national origin.<sup>10</sup> ESEA requires that funds used for professional development enable school sites to “prepare all students to meet the challenging State academic standards” and “increase student achievement consistent with [those] challenging State academic standards.”<sup>11</sup> ESEA further requires the State to certify exactly how its ESEA funded activities are “aligned with [these] challenging State academic standards.”<sup>12</sup> The State also must assure the federal government that it will monitor the grant's implementation for compliance.<sup>13</sup> (While ESEA generally prohibits the federal government's involvement with local and state-created curriculum, CSMP is independently governed by the University of California Regents; neither the University of California nor CSMP is a state agency.<sup>14</sup>)

CSMP’s instructional materials and professional development programs are discriminatory and do not align with the California State Board of Education’s approved academic and social content standards. See Appendix B. For instance, they do not “recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects [nor] identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations.”

CSMP is funded through federal ESEA Title II, Part A grants. CSMP received \$32.5 million in federal funding between 2019 and 2026. The State’s California Collaborative for Educational Excellence – which assists with federal grants’ legal compliance – runs the 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (Academy) that delivers CSMP content to schools. The Academy received \$102 million in federal ESEA Title II funds through 2026.

In the State of California proposed June 2026 Budget for fiscal year 2026–27, CSMP is slated to receive \$3.41 million in ESEA Title II funding. The Academy is slated to receive \$13 million. See Appendix A.

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<sup>9</sup> California Department of Education, *California Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan*, December 2023, page 129, <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/es/>

<sup>10</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 8534 (Civil Rights), codified as 20 U.S.C. Section 7914.

<sup>11</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Sections 2001 and 2101(c)(4)(B)(viii) (Purpose and State Uses of Funds), codified in 20 U.S.C. Sections 6601 and 6611(c)(4)(B)(viii)

<sup>12</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 2101(d)(2)(C) (State Application), codified in 20 U.S.C. Section 6611(d)(2)(C).

<sup>13</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 2101(d)(2)(G) (State Application), codified in 20 U.S.C. Section 6611(d)(2)(G).

<sup>14</sup> California Constitution Article IX, Section 9(a)

[https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX) and University of California Office of the President Presidential Policies [California Constitution Article 9 – Education](#)

## Illustrative Examples

As further detailed in Appendices C and D, CSMP's K–12 instructional materials, recommended resources, and professional development programs present contested historical positions and assert political claims as established fact; omit and misrepresent Jewish history, current events, identity, and indigeneity; and, as stated above, fail to align with the California State Board of Education's academic and social content standards requiring for example teaching "the complexity of historical causes and effects" with students "identify[ing] bias and prejudice in historical interpretations."

These concerns are evident in the work produced at several University of California CSMP centers including:

1. **Selective Historical Framing & Omission of Key Historical Facts:** Inquiry sets from CSMP University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project:
  - a. “*Nations and Terrorism*” inquiry set presents primary source justifications for terrorism, instructing students to examine "the culpability of American actions." Students read Iran Ayatollah Khomeini's speech describing his Shi'ite revolutionary movement as needed to “put the United States in its place [and] cut off its hands” – the “straight path of Islam ... is fighting against oppressive powers” – while omitting his regime's seeding terrorism and violence in the Middle East and severe oppression of women, homosexuals, and Jews.<sup>15</sup>
  - b. “*Modern Palestinian History*” inquiry set, created with Chair of University of California Berkeley Palestinian and Arab Studies Department Professor Ussama Makdisi's assistance, frames Jewish presence in Israel as European "Zionist colonization" beginning in the late 19th century, omitting over two millennia of continuous Jewish presence in the region. Similarly, its instructional materials characterize the movement of Jewish communities from countries such as Iraq and Egypt as “emigration,” without incorporating Jews' presence in the region nor the documented expulsions, detention, and confiscation of property that accompanied the forced departure of nearly one million Jewish refugees from those countries in the 20th century.<sup>16</sup>
2. **Presentation of Contested Claims as Fact:** CSMP University of California Los Angeles History and Geography Project's K-12 Ethnic Studies Certificate Program<sup>17</sup> focuses on “the occupation of Palestine and genocide of Palestinians,” as well as on "critical perspectives on terrorism and global conflicts,”<sup>18</sup> using political publisher Rethinking School's "*Teaching Palestine*" as a resource<sup>19</sup> – all partisan political positions devoid of historical context, legal definitions, and competing perspectives.
3. **Biased Representation:** CSMP University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project's High School Ethnic Studies Initiative promotes "liberated" Ethnic Studies resources that are embedded with anti-Israel biases. It co-hosted a professional development program for K-12 teachers with a university professor who called out the “lies of the Zionist regime” as the reason

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<sup>15</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>17</sup> UCLA Teacher Education Program (@k12ethnicstudiesatucla), *Instagram post*, March 17, 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/k12ethnicstudiesatucla/p/DHUrI2vP6Sy/>

<sup>18</sup> UCLA Teacher Education Program Faculty Advisor Darlene Lee, Declaration, *American Association of University Professors v. Donald Trump*, No. 3:25-cv-07864-RFL, October 5, 2025 (U.S. District Court, Northern District of California).

<sup>19</sup> Zinn Education Project (@zinneeducationproject), *Instagram post*, August 8, 2025, <https://www.instagram.com/p/DNGO38DANih/>

they should teach about Palestine in their classrooms, without offering countervailing facts and interpretations,<sup>20</sup> and

4. **Promotion of Activist-Driven Content:** CSMP University of California Santa Cruz History and Civics Project's K-12 Ethnic Studies Pedagogy Collaborative's recommended "Palestinian Liberation Resources" are rife with anti-Israel materials prepared by activists including the Middle East Children's Alliance, Palestinian Youth Movement, Palestinian Feminist Collective, and Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Consortium.<sup>21</sup>

### **Call for Investigation and Funding Suspension**

Accordingly, we respectfully call for the United States House Committee on Education and Workforce and the United States Departments of Justice, Education, and Labor to (i) conduct a comprehensive review of CSMP's instructional materials and K-12 professional development programs, and (ii) take appropriate enforcement actions—including the suspension of CSMP's federal ESEA funding -- where violations of federal law are identified until corrections are made.

JIMENA and The Education Policy Project's request for this review of CSMP is grounded in our shared commitment with your Committee and Departments to ensure that K–12 public school students receive accurate, balanced, and standards-aligned instruction. While we affirm the importance of academic freedom and the role of universities in fostering open inquiry, debate, and exposure to diverse perspectives, that does not override the State of California's obligation to comply with their federal grants' terms and conditions. The requested review will help uphold that standard and ensure that publicly funded programs meet their intended purpose.

We appreciate your attention to this critically important matter and stand ready to provide any additional information that may be helpful.



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cc: U.S. Representative Kevin Kiley, U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce (CA, Majority)

Paul R. Moore, Deputy General Counsel, U.S. Department of Education

Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor

Leo Terrell, Chair of the Federal Task Force to Combat Antisemitism, U.S. Department of Justice

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<sup>20</sup> See Appendix D.

<sup>21</sup> University of California Santa Cruz History and Civics Project's "Ethnic Studies Pedagogy Collaborative Resources Main Document," (on file with author)

## Appendix A

### California Subject Matter Project

#### Program Overview

The California Subject Matter Project (CSMP) is a federally funded program overseen by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP). It serves as a central mechanism through which university-developed scholarship – translated into instructional materials and professional development content – are disseminated to K–12 public school classrooms throughout California.

CSMP provides instructional material and professional development to approximately 1,000 public school districts serving nearly 6 million K-12 students statewide.<sup>1</sup> The program operates through nine subject matter projects housed throughout the University of California system and runs its program at 90 regional sites.<sup>2</sup> By 2022, the most recent year for which information is available, CSMP had nearly 40,000 California K-12 educators in its network and had shifted its focus almost exclusively to high school Ethnic Studies.<sup>3</sup>

California’s Statewide System of Support – the California State Board of Education, the California Department of Education (CDE), and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) – helps school districts meet students’ needs and administer federally-funded programs.<sup>4</sup> Within this structure, CCEE delivers CSMP’s materials and professional training to school districts through its Title II federally-funded<sup>5</sup> 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (Academy),<sup>6</sup> which employs an “inquiry” model aimed at “transforming education [for] those who are systemically marginalized and historically underserved.”<sup>7</sup> CDE, with CCEE’s assistance, oversees federal law compliance for Academy

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Education, “*Fingertip Facts on Education in California*,” <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/ceffingertipfacts.asp>

<sup>2</sup> California Subject Matter Project, *CSMP Highlights Brochure*, [https://csmp.online/\\_files/documents/csmp-highlights-brochure.pdf](https://csmp.online/_files/documents/csmp-highlights-brochure.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Testimony of Claudia Martinez, Executive Director of University of California Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs in the University of California Office of the President, at the California Assembly Ethnic Studies Teacher Certification Oversight Hearing, video, May 11, 2022, <https://www.assembly.ca.gov/media/assembly-higher-education-committee-20220511> (hour 1:55-1:57).

<sup>4</sup> California Statewide System of Support, <https://systemofsupport.org/> and <https://systemofsupport.org/?playlist=f3cbd18&video=84d888c>

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. California Budget Act of 2025 (SB 101), Section 2 under 6100-195-0890 and 6100-001-0890 [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202520260SB101](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB101)

<sup>6</sup> 21st Century California School Leadership Academy, “*About 21CSLA*,” <https://21cslacenter.berkeley.edu/about-21csla> and California Education Code Section 44690(c)(1), [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=44690&lawCode=EDC](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=44690&lawCode=EDC).

<sup>7</sup> 21st Century California School Leadership Academy, “*Inquiry: Why Now?*,” 2021, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VKjFL2JwftLOTzu5tps-eTjwNFjV0Q1Q/view>. See also the Academy’s 2024 and 2025 “Ethnic Studies Foundation” teacher training and community of practice sessions, co-led by CSMP’s University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project’s Ethnic Studies Coordinator. <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk8426/files/media/documents/SCOE%2021CSLA%20ETHNIC%20STUDIES%20FLYER%20121024%20V11.pdf>. The coordinator promoted private anti-Israel liberated Ethnic Studies consulting firms at this program (on file with author).

programs including CSMP.<sup>8</sup> The California State Board of Education ensures compliance with federal funding requirements and directs CDE's work.<sup>9</sup>

In May 2025, UCOP represented to the federal government that the University of California was “entirely focused on strengthening [its] programs . . . to root out antisemitism and all forms of discrimination.”<sup>10</sup> Shortly thereafter, however, CSMP acknowledged that aspects of its programming raised concerns due to their “politically controversial” nature.<sup>11</sup>

## Federal Funding

CSMP is funded through federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title II, Part A grants. CSMP received \$32.5 million in federal funding between 2019 and 2026. The California Legislature is proposing that CSMP receive \$3.41 million in ESEA funding in the State of California's June 2026 Budget for fiscal year 2026–27.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, CCEE's Academy has received \$102 million in ESEA grants since 2019. The California Legislature is proposing that the Academy receive an additional \$13 million in ESEA Title II, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction funding in the State of California's June 2026 Budget for fiscal year 2026–27.<sup>13</sup>

## K-12 Curriculum Pipeline

In the CSMP, university faculty, graduate students, and K–12 educators collaborate in developing instructional materials and teacher trainings, with K-12 teachers then incorporating CSMP's instructional materials and tenets gleaned from CSMP's professional training into their own instruction and instructional materials. CSMP asserts that it brings “academically grounded lessons . . . into K–12 classrooms,”<sup>14</sup> creating a direct pathway through which university faculty's work directly informs K-12 public school instruction.

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<sup>8</sup> California Education Code Sections 44690(f) and (g), [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=44690&lawCode=EDC](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=44690&lawCode=EDC) and California Budget Act of 2025 (SB 101), Section 2 under 6100-195-0890 and 6100-001-0890 [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202520260SB101](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB101)

<sup>9</sup> California Education Code Sections 12030 through 12032 and California Education Code Section 33111 (“Superintendent of Public Instruction shall execute, under direction of the State Board of Education, the [SBE’s] policies”)

<sup>10</sup> Daily Bruin, “Federal official claims Trump administration intends to sue UC for discrimination,” May 28, 2025, <https://dailybruin.com/2025/05/28/federal-official-claims-trump-administration-intends-to-sue-uc-for-discrimination>

<sup>11</sup> University of California Office of the President, *California Subject Matter Project (CSMP) In-Person Concurrence Committee Meeting Agenda*, June 4, 2025, Oakland, CA, <https://ucop.app.box.com/s/nvuotzggm5xuzmh9tprazthlis234s0/folder/310465746702> (its attached report is on file with author)

<sup>12</sup> Proposed California State Budget Act of 2026, Assembly Bill 1563, Section 2, Item 6100-195-0890 (\$3,410,000) [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202520260AB1563&search\\_keywords=%22Budget+Act+of+2027%22](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1563&search_keywords=%22Budget+Act+of+2027%22)

<sup>13</sup> Proposed California State Budget Act of 2026, Assembly Bill 1563, Section 2, Items 6100-001-0890 (\$226,000) and 6100-195-0890 (\$12,828,000), [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202520260AB1563&search\\_keywords=%22Budget+Act+of+2027%22](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1563&search_keywords=%22Budget+Act+of+2027%22)

<sup>14</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Bringing Middle Eastern History into K-12 Classrooms,” May 19, 2025, <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/blog/bringing-middle-eastern-history-k-12-classrooms>

This structure is a core component of California's university-to-K-12 instruction pipeline. As a result, the biased frameworks presented in university settings are incorporated into instructional materials and teaching practices used in public school classrooms across the state.

## Content Providers and Experts

CSMP's Middle East professional training and instructional materials were developed with the expert assistance of university faculty whose primary focus is Ottoman history, Middle Eastern Studies, and related fields, many of whom have participated in anti-Israel activism. Several CSMP's leads and expert contributors promote one-sided, biased materials such as a 2026 video from CSMP's partner University of California Berkeley Ethnic Studies Department on "Dismantling Anti-Palestinian Racism" tagging Israel a genocidal, settler-colonial state;<sup>15</sup> support the BDS movement; and signing Students for Justice in Palestine's statement urging the University of California Regents to issue a statement condemning Israel as an apartheid state.<sup>16</sup>

A recent expert CSMP retained, for example, is University of California Berkeley Professor Ussama Makdisi who participated in University of California Davis' Middle East in Historical Context speaker series and advised on its associated K-12 instructional materials. Professor Makdisi is the inaugural May Ziadeh Chair of the university's new, multi-million dollar anonymously funded Palestinian and Arab Studies Department<sup>17</sup> formed following negotiations of the "Free Palestine" encampment activist leaders' demands<sup>18</sup> to, in part, create this new department.

The U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce's 2026 *"How Campuses Became Hotbeds: The Rise of Radical Antisemitism on College Campuses"* report<sup>19</sup> called out Professor Makdisi for "normaliz[ing] antisemitic violence online, in the classrooms, and with administrators." Committee Chair Walberg stated that "he misses a moral issue of humanity."<sup>20</sup> Another Congressman noted his statement

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<sup>15</sup> University of California, Berkeley. "Dismantling Anti-Palestinian Racism" video and resources, February 2026, <https://ethnicstudies.berkeley.edu/resources/dismantling-anti-palestinian-racism> and [https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vTLXbpCZ2C6\\_MHKp2VH7fEeM-0v700SLdld3FFIjjuYqQrGqBv9FB8tHMR-wK82Y4kTfLfUICljauq-/pub](https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vTLXbpCZ2C6_MHKp2VH7fEeM-0v700SLdld3FFIjjuYqQrGqBv9FB8tHMR-wK82Y4kTfLfUICljauq-/pub). See also <https://vimeo.com/1166790069?fl=pl&fe=v1>

<sup>16</sup> "Condemnation Letter of the University of California Board of Regents Statement on Mideast Violence," publicly circulated document, October 10, 2023, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tap\\_hmvGLSo0doQdvCDKRSQ54REFfBV5dhuks5VVb5A](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tap_hmvGLSo0doQdvCDKRSQ54REFfBV5dhuks5VVb5A) On March 25, 2026, the U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce posted University of California Berkeley's Students for Justice in Palestine brandishing assault rifles accompanied by this call for armed resistance: "The armed option is the only way. What was taken by force should be returned by force. This is a Zionist enemy. There is no place for negotiations." <https://x.com/EdWorkforceCmte/status/2037256247796211727>

<sup>17</sup> Teresa Watanabe, "UC Berkeley launches one of the nation's few Palestinian-Arab studies programs amid demand," *Los Angeles Times*, September 10, 2024, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-09-10/uc-berkeley-launches-palestinian-studies-amid-high-demand>

<sup>18</sup> Riley Cooke (@rrileycooke), post on X (formerly Twitter), April 27, 2024, <https://x.com/rrileycooke/status/1784305266231849309>

<sup>19</sup> U.S. House Committee on Education and Workforce, "How Campuses Became Hotbeds: The Rise of Radical Antisemitism on College Campuses," March 2026, <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/kw4w8wuxj9ecwpevss7gp/How-Campuses-Became-Hotbeds-the-Rise-of-Radical-Antisemitism-on-College-Campuses.pdf?rlkey=tsuha6vybakp5oqlxhto1euth&e=6&st=08c027lp&dl=0>

<sup>20</sup> U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce, "Antisemitism in Higher Education: Examining the Role of Faculty, Funding, and Ideology" video, July 15, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/live/T-R8vkAYekI> (hour 3:27)

that he could have been “one of those who broke through the siege on October 7th”<sup>21</sup> when over 1,200 Israelis were brutally massacred by Hamas terrorists.

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<sup>21</sup> Stop Antisemitism (@StopAntisemites), “*Ussama Makdisi is a Professor of History & Chancellor's Chair at UC Berkeley*” X (formerly Twitter), February 10, 2024, <https://x.com/StopAntisemites/status/1755977466579955809>

## Appendix B

### **California State Board of Education Approved Academic Content Standards**

A. California State Board of Education’s History–Social Science Content Standards<sup>22</sup> Grades 9 through 12 (excerpts)

“Distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations”

“Identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations”

“Evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors’ use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications”

“Recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects”

“Interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values”

“Understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events and recognize that events could have taken other directions”

“Use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including ...the frictions that develop between population groups”

B. California State Board of Education’s Social Content Standards<sup>23</sup> (excerpts)

1. Adverse reflection. Descriptions, depictions, labels, or rejoinders that tend to demean, stereotype, or patronize minority groups are prohibited.
2. Proportion of portrayals. Instructional materials containing references to, or illustrations of, people must portray accurately, to the extent possible, the roles and contributions of a fair proportion of diverse ethnic groups, especially those groups referenced in the statute (Section 60040 [b]).
3. Customs and lifestyles. When ethnic or cultural groups are portrayed, portrayals must not depict differences in customs or lifestyles as undesirable and must not reflect adversely on such differences.
4. Occupations. If professional or executive roles, trade jobs, or other gainful occupations are portrayed, majority and minority groups should be presented therein in fair proportion.
5. Socioeconomic settings. Minority persons should be depicted in the same range of socioeconomic settings as are persons of the majority group.

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<sup>22</sup> California State Board of Education’s History–Social Science Content Standards, <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/histsocscistnd.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> California State Board of Education’s Social Content Standards, <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/>

6. Achievements. Whenever developments in history or current events, or achievements in art, science, or other fields, are presented, the contributions of minority persons, particularly prominent minority persons, should be included and discussed when it is historically accurate to do so.

## Appendix C

### University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, a University of California California Subject Matter Project.*<sup>24</sup>

#### Overview

California Subject Matter Project's University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project (UCD CHSSP) provides consulting services, academic programming, instructional materials, and professional development to K–12 administrators and educators. It serves as a pathway through which university-developed frameworks and perspectives are incorporated into K–12 classroom instruction.

#### Analysis

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) bars the funding of programs that discriminate on the basis of religion and national origin.<sup>25</sup> UCD CHSSP's materials advance positions and resources that are dismissive and critical of Jews (Zionists).

ESEA also requires that grant funds used for professional development enable school sites to “prepare all students to meet the challenging State academic standards.”<sup>26</sup> UCD CHSSP's content fails to meet this requirement as it violates the California State Board of Education's approved History–Social Science Content Standards. Specifically, the content does not (i) distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations, (ii) identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations, (iii) evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications, (iv) recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, and (v) interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, UCD CHSSP's content does not align with the California State Board of Education's approved Social Content Standards by it adversely reflecting on Jews (Zionists), a minority group.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, UCD CHSSP's content is inconsistent with the California Constitution and University of California Regents' Bylaws which state that the University of California must be administered "entirely independent of all political or sectarian influence and kept free therefrom."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/>

<sup>25</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 8534 (Civil Rights), codified as 20 U.S.C. Section 7914.

<sup>26</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 2101(c)(4)(B)(viii) (State Uses of Funds), codified in 20 U.S.C. Section 6611(c)(4)(B)(viii).

<sup>27</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>29</sup> California Constitution Article IX, Section 9(f)

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX) and Regents of the University of California Bylaw 12 <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/bylaws/bl12.html>.

The above concerns are reflected in the following program and materials:

## 1. Middle East in Historical Context

In 2025, UCD CHSSP offered the “Middle East in Historical Context” initiative<sup>30</sup> with the University of California Davis History Department and the University of California Davis Middle East/South Asia Studies Program. This initiative combined a speaker series<sup>31</sup> with K-12 curriculum materials they created, funded by a University of California Office of the President (UCOP) grant for programs that address antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of bias and hate. University of California Davis History Professor Stacy Fahrenthold submitted this grant proposal.<sup>32</sup>

### a. Speaker Series

Source: University of California Davis, “Middle East in Historical Context Speaker Series: The Tragedy of Modern Palestinian History: From Nahda to Nakba,” May 5, 2025.<sup>33</sup>

University of California Davis History Professor Stacy Fahrenthold described Professor Makdisi’s lecture “Middle East in Historical Context - The Tragedy of Modern Palestinian History: From Nahda to Nakba” as “an urgent reflection into ... why confronting this genocide [in Palestine] requires better historical understanding.”<sup>34</sup>

While this lecture is not publicly available, Professor Makdisi gave a similar talk, "Palestine in Modern History,"<sup>35</sup> prior to this event. In that talk, Professor Makdisi characterized the October 7, 2023 Hamas massacre of 1,200 Israeli citizens as "Palestinian guerillas broke out of the ghetto of Gaza." He dismissed the "Eurocentric Philo-Zionist" framing of October 7 and argued Israelis bore responsibility for Hamas’ attack because they are living on stolen Palestinian lands, describing Zionism as "systematically cruel and violent and manifestly unjust ... ethnoreligious project." Professor Makdisi concluded his lecture calling on students to replace “the trap of liberal inclusion” with "ethical armed struggle."

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<sup>30</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Bringing Middle Eastern History into K–12 Classrooms,” May 19, 2025, <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/blog/bringing-middle-eastern-history-k-12-classrooms>

<sup>31</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Middle East in Historical Context,” <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/middle-east-historical-context>

<sup>32</sup> University of California Davis Addressing Bias and Bigotry Funding Proposal and Grant, “History of the Middle East,” March 7, 2024, (\$80,000) (on file with author).

<sup>33</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, University of California Berkeley Professor Ussama Madkisi, “Speaker Series: Middle East in Historical Context: The Tragedy of Modern Palestinian History: From Nahda to Nakba,” May 5, 2025, <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/events/middle-east-series-makdisi>

<sup>34</sup> University of California Davis History Professor Stacy Fahrenthold Facebook post, April 29, 2025, <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10233160252160838&set=a.1169910480362>. See also Fahrenthold Bluesky post (@sfahrenthold.bsky.social), October 23, 2023: “It’s a genocide, a failure that we Americans bear responsibility for because we support and embolden a settler colonial ethnostate as it literally commits genocide. Ceasefire now. Call your reps!” <https://bsky.app/profile/sfahrenthold.bsky.social/post/3kcgkuznsy2q>

<sup>35</sup> University of California Berkeley Professor Ussama Makdisi, University of California Berkeley Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures lecture “Despite Obfuscation and Orientalism: Palestine in Modern History” video, February 16, 2024, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9aqep\\_55Dc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9aqep_55Dc)

## ***b. Inquiry Sets***

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Middle East in Historical Context Inquiry Sets,” August 29, 2025.<sup>36</sup>*

UCD CHSSP developed four inquiry-based instructional sets<sup>37</sup> for use in California K–12 classrooms as part of its “Middle East in Historical Context” initiative. These sets—*Premodern Elite Culture in Andalusia; Middle Eastern Jewish Life and Early Zionism, 1880–1920; The Arab American Immigrant Experience; and Modern Palestinian History*—were funded by a University of California Office of the President grant for programs that address antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of bias and hate. They are to support K-12 classroom instruction by providing students primary sources and frameworks for analyzing historical events and interpreting themes related to Middle Eastern and Arab American history.

### **i. “Modern Palestinian History” Inquiry Set**

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Middle East in Historical Context Inquiry Set: Modern Palestinian History”<sup>38</sup>*

#### **Content**

The “Modern Palestinian History” inquiry set’s teachers notes assert that the set “contextualiz[es] the 1948 Nakba (the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the emerging State of Israel),” to show students how “the emergence of political Zionism, a Jewish nationalist ideology with roots in nineteenth-century Europe, came to Palestine” and resulted in “the mass displacement of 750,000 Palestinians, an ethnic cleansing that has led to ongoing conflict between indigenous Palestinians and Jewish settlers and immigrants.”

The inquiry set further asserts that “Jewish immigration to Palestine began in the 1880s, during the Ottoman period.” Also referred to as Zionism, this influx of Jews is framed as “a political movement beginning in nineteenth-century Europe for the development of Jewish nationalism” with Jews tagged “Zionist colonists.” Teachers are to show their students a map establishing Palestinian indigeneity in the land. The set states that Palestinians were not consulted when the region was divided by the United Nations’ plan that “sought to allocate two-thirds of the total land area ... to the Jewish population,” which sparked the war at Israel’s founding.

Ottoman Palestine is portrayed as one of “the most prosperous, tolerant, and multicultural regions of the empire” in contrast to antisemitism which was sweeping Europe during that time period.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/blog/middle-east-historical-context-inquiry-sets>

<sup>37</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Middle East in Historical Context Inquiry Sets,” August 29, 2025, <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/blog/middle-east-historical-context-inquiry-sets>

<sup>38</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project Inquiry Set “Modern Palestinian History,” 2025, <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/0fbpxqh73wbyw62q7jareq092efxkc1p> (edited by Nina Gonzalez, Stacy Fahrenthold, and Beth Slutsky, California History-Social Science Project)

## Analysis

The inquiry set does not provide a comprehensive explanation of Zionism or its historical and ideological dimensions, depriving students of the opportunity to understand Zionism as the Jewish right to self-determination in their indigenous homeland. Rather, Jewish presence in the region is taught through the lens of European “Zionist colonization,” erasing the continuous presence of Jewish communities in Israel and the broader Middle East over thousands of years and portraying Jews as a European colonial power rather than as an indigenous, exiled people of Middle Eastern descent returning to their ancestral land.

The displacement of Palestinians in 1948 and that Israel occupied Palestinian lands in 1967 are presented without essential historical context, legal context, or competing perspectives such as the systemic ethnic cleansing of Jews from Arab countries beginning in the early 1950s, the multinational war of Arab countries against Israel upon its founding in 1948, Jewish land purchases in pre-state Israel, and competing national movements across the region.

The set’s 1920-1948 “Palestine British Mandate” map is incomplete and misleading. The map’s source is not provided and it diverges dramatically from the approved 1947 United Nations General Assembly Partition Plan map which shows a nearly 50:50 land allocation,<sup>39</sup> with 60% of the Jewish state’s share located in the arid Negev Desert.<sup>40</sup>

The set’s characterization of the Ottoman period as “prosperous, tolerant, and multicultural” omits the (i) legal and social conditions which subjected Jewish communities to structural inequalities that the Ottoman Empire imposed on minorities, and (ii) violent antisemitism in the empire during that time period.

### ii. **“Middle Eastern Jewish Life and Early Zionism, 1880–1920” Inquiry Set**

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, “Middle East in Historical Context Inquiry Set: Middle Eastern Jewish Life and Early Zionism, 1880–1920”<sup>41</sup>*

#### Content

The “Middle Eastern Jewish Life and Early Zionism, 1880–1920” inquiry set establishes Zionism as a late 19th-century European political movement by using 1880 as its starting point. The inquiry set characterizes the movement of Jewish communities from Middle Eastern countries as “emigration.”

It also presents primary sources that emphasize opposition to Zionism by Sephardic Jewish figures.

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<sup>39</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, “United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181,” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/United-Nations-Resolution-181>

<sup>40</sup> Jewish Virtual Library, “The Partition Plan: Background and Overview,” <https://jewishvirtuallibrary.org/map-of-the-u-n-partition-plan>

<sup>41</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project Inquiry Set “Middle Eastern Jewish Life and Early Zionism 1880-1920,” 2025, <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/wk14mc3fty2utuc8g3nk44nvdu1n2ctt> (edited by Stacy Fahrenthold and Beth Slutsky, California History Social-Science Project)

## Analysis

This inquiry set omits the Jewish people’s continuous presence and religious connection to the land of Israel spanning over two millennia and overlooks the enduring, 2,000-year diasporic Jewish longing to return to the land of Judea—modern-day Israel, the birthplace of Jewish civilization and Jewish peoplehood—a longing connection to the land expressed across Jewish communities worldwide, including in the Middle East and North Africa, since the Babylonian Exile beginning in 597 BCE.

Not mentioned in the set are the reasons Jews left their homes in Arab Middle Eastern countries at the time: well-documented history of widespread, state-sanctioned persecution, displacement, economic strangulation, arbitrary imprisonments, and ethnic cleansings experienced by the Middle Eastern and North African Jewish communities in Arab lands in the 20th century that necessitated their relocation.

As for the assertion that Sephardic Jews opposed Zionism, the inquiry set cites an obscure, non-representative person to make this point. Mizrahi and Sephardic Jewish communities were not uniformly opposed to Zionism. Over time, support of Zionism grew in response to changing political conditions, rising nationalism, and increasing pressures placed by rulers on Jewish life in the region. Today the vast majority of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews identify as Zionist.

The inquiry set also relies on inconsistently defined and highly politicized language to describe Middle Eastern Jews, depriving students of the tools necessary to properly understand Jewish identity. For example, the vast majority of Jews from Middle Eastern countries reject the term “Arab Jew” used in the set, yet the term continues to be used in university professors’ work.

## 2. Additional Inquiry Set and Lessons

### a. “Nations and Terrorism” Inquiry Set

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, Inquiry Set “Nations and Terrorism”<sup>42</sup>*

#### Content

The “Nations and Terrorism” inquiry set is to assist students analyze terrorism and government responses to it, with a primary focus on Islamist terrorism.

The materials state that the motivations of terrorists are “complex,” asserting that “we cannot examine issues of terrorism without examining the culpability of American actions in the past.”

Students are directed to engage with primary source materials that present justifications for terrorism, including (i) Iran’s Ayatollah Ruhollah Mosavi Khomeini rationalizing terrorism as adhering to the “straight path of Islam, which is fighting against oppressive powers” necessary to “put the United States in its place [and] cut off its hands,” and (ii) revolutionary Carlos Marighella’s manifesto calling upon oppressed peoples to unite in liberation struggles, defining victory as the “destruction of

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<sup>42</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project Inquiry Set, “Nations and Terrorism,” 2020, <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/3x47nwqi4hqkxowj3jlpd5lnvd7uh6dz> (curated and written by Beth Slutsky, California History-Social Science Project)

imperialism” through prolonged and violent conflict against the United States, described as the “great enemy of the human race.”

## Analysis

This inquiry set does not include broader contextual information necessary to evaluate the selected sources i.e., it does not provide substantive historical background on the wide scope of terrorist actions such as Khomeini’s severe oppression of women, homosexuals and Jews domestically. Rather, it emphasizes perspectives that frame terrorism within narrow, aspirational narratives of resistance to oppression and imperialism, the face of the latter being the United States. It also does not incorporate perspectives of victims of terrorism, scholars of extremist ideologies, or the economic and human impact of terrorism on the communities directly impacted by terrorist violence.

### b. “Terrorism” Lesson

Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, Lesson “Terrorism”<sup>43</sup>

## Content

This “Terrorism” inquiry set states that its aim is to defuse uninformed assumptions about terrorism, namely, to convey that not all terrorists are Muslim or Islamists but also are White and anti-Muslim. The lesson includes statistics showing that the two most active terrorist groups in the United States in 2017 were Whites and anti-Muslim extremists. While acknowledging Al-Qaeda’s 9/11 in the teacher notes only, the lesson asserts that no Islamist groups, including Al-Qaeda, operate in the United States. It notes that statistics do not include terrorism from state actors such as the police and armies.

The lesson further asserts that globally, however, 70% of the most active terrorist groups are Islamist whose “primary goal is not to fight the United States and its ‘moral corruption’ of the world but to carry out a political revolution [for theocracies] in their own countries.”

Half of this lesson’s focus is on terrorists’ communication channels of choice, notably the website Global Islamic Media “which disseminates propaganda and provides jihadists with tools (bomb manuals, encryption software, etc.) needed to carry out jihad.” The lesson asks teachers to have their students answer “How did global internet connections facilitate the planned terrorist attack by Said Namouh and Mohammed Mahmoud?” with this fill-in-the-blank assignment: “Internet connections, especially \_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_, facilitated the planned terrorist attack ...because \_\_\_\_.” (blanks in original)

## Analysis

Half of this lesson reads as a “how to” manual on terrorists’ communications channels of choice, rather than academic content on terrorism history, ideology, impact, and ramifications. At that, the lesson does not indicate that the communications website it mentions – Global Islamic Media – is U.S. designated foreign terrorist organization Al-Qaeda’s “mouthpiece group.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project Inquiry Set, “Terrorism,” 2019, <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/1lu0pb8mrk1nnu3kn5pupaux2m8kqvm> (curated and written by Shennan Hutton, California History-Social Science Project)

<sup>44</sup> Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point, “Al-Qa`ida’s Extensive Use of the Internet,” January 2008, <https://ctc.westpoint.edu/al-qaidas-extensive-use-of-the-internet/>

On academic content, this 2019 lesson is narrowly focused, internally inconsistent, and not current. For example, its student readings feature the 28-year-old White extremist’s lone-wolf anti-Muslim terrorist attack in New Zealand.

Conversely, content on Islamist Al-Qaeda’s September 11, 2001 planned attack on the World Trade Center in New York City was placed in the teacher notes only, despite conveying to teachers that this attack is “considered the most lethal terrorist attack in world history, with 2,977 innocent victims killed.” The inquiry set asserts elsewhere, contradictorily, that Al-Qaeda does not operate in the United States. No student content is provided on the deadliest domestic terrorist act in the United States, the 1995 truck bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma.

Furthermore, there is no updated content so no student readings or teacher notes on the October 7, 2023 U.S.-designated terrorist organization Hamas’ attack in Israel which murdered 1,200 Jewish Israeli citizens and maimed thousands more. Also, the lesson cites 2017 statistics from the Global Terrorism Database; this resource is no longer maintained. The up-to-date Global Terrorism Index is not referenced. Its 2025 index<sup>45</sup> reports that in 2024 Islamic organizations were responsible for over 75% of all terrorism-related deaths globally. It calls out the “surge in [terrorist caused] deaths in 2023, driven by Hamas’ October 7 attack in Israel,” and the “sharp increase in antisemitic violence and hate crimes across the West [which in the United States] rose by over 200 per cent in 2024 [and] by 270 per cent in the two months after the start of the Gaza war.”

### c. **“Cold War: Decolonization” Lesson**

*Source: University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project, Lesson “Cold War-Decolonization”<sup>46</sup>*

#### **Content**

An aspirational reading passage on the Third Way – nations aiming to be separate from the United States and Soviet Union – is from Frantz Fanon’s “Wretched of the Earth” calling for “humanity to advance a step farther,” for example to end racism.

Much of the lesson’s content pertains to Egypt noting that the Muslim Brotherhood was popular with the Egyptians because it “called for independence for Egypt, protection of Islamic values and social reforms.” The lesson uses the example of Egypt’s second president, Gamal Abd al-Nasser, who mounted a successful coup d’etat in 1952, to, among other things, make social reforms and avenge Israel’s defeat of Egypt.

On avenging Israel, the lesson frames the Jews as mostly from Europe and the United States who believed that the region was given to their ancestors by God. Zionism is defined as a movement to “create a Jewish homeland in Palestine” with many Jews then moving there. Conversely, the “Palestinians...the Arab ethnic group who lived in Palestine, believed that the area was their homeland as well.” These competing claims caused conflicts and intolerance with the Egyptians and other Arabs wanting “the Palestinians...to keep the land,” seeing Jews as non-native colonizers from Europe. After the United

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<sup>45</sup> Global Terrorism Index 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-terrorism-index-2025>

<sup>46</sup> University of California Davis California History-Social Science Project Lesson “Cold War-Decolonization,” 2013, <https://ucdavis.app.box.com/s/6aams84eqj5p462kz60585f0x4sho7sq> and <https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/resources/curriculum/lessons/cold-war-decolonization>

Nations split the land between the two, a war began which Israel won, “an embarrassing defeat on its Arab neighbors, including Egypt.”

The lesson incorporates a United States red-state/blue-state political map, asking students to imagine how they would “decolonize” the United States.

### **Analysis**

Not noted in Fanon’s “Third Way” reading passage is the importance of violence; Fanon’s book “Wretched of the Earth” begins with “decolonization is always a violent phenomenon.”

The portrayals of the Muslim Brotherhood and Nasser are also romanticized. The Muslim Brotherhood was suspected to have launched assassination attempts against Nasser and terrorist plots against Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood’s history also is one of violence toward and hatred of Jews. “Social reforms” in Nasser’s Egypt included mass arrests and internment of Jewish men as well as widespread expulsions, property confiscation, and the forced displacement of Egypt’s Jewish community.

The instructional materials present Jewish connections to the land where Israel is sited through a narrative that frames Jews as interlopers, motivated by Zionism defined as a late 19th-century European colonial movement emerging in response to antisemitism rather than as a decolonial desire for self-determination for the Jewish people to return to their indigenous homeland. It omits key historical context such as the continuous Jewish presence for millennia in the land of Israel and across the Middle East and North Africa -- long before Muslims.

## Appendix D

### University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project

*Sources* University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project, a University of California California Subject Matter Project,<sup>47</sup> and University of California Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative, a collaboration of the University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project, University of California Berkeley Ethnic Studies Department, and University of California Berkeley American Cultures Center.<sup>48</sup>

#### Overview

California Subject Matter Project's University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project (UCB HSSP) provides consulting services, academic programming, instructional materials, and professional development to K–12 administrators and educators, creating a pathway through which university-developed frameworks and perspectives are incorporated into K–12 classroom instruction.

UCB HSSP co-leads the University of California Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative (Initiative).

#### Content

UCB HSSP's Initiative recommends liberated Ethnic Studies K-12 classroom content and pedagogical approaches; liberated Ethnic Studies presents contested theories on race and identity, as well as history, as settled conclusions rather than topics for evaluation and inquiry.

This Initiative:

1. Published its professional development scholar series program "*Teaching Histories of Anti-Imperialist Solidarity*."<sup>49</sup>

Advertisement for the program was emblazoned with militant anti-Israel Palestinian Liberation Organization's graphic.<sup>50</sup>

A university Assistant Professor instructed high school teachers to embrace "political agitation." An Associate Professor encouraged teachers to reclaim Ethnic Studies' "radical, revolutionary" socialist Third World movement roots and "be committed...as comrades." He harkened the "lies of the Zionist regime" as the reason to teach about Palestine: "you can't be for Black liberation

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<sup>47</sup> University of California Berkeley History-Social Science Project, <https://ucbhssp.berkeley.edu/>

<sup>48</sup> University of California Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative, <https://americancultures.berkeley.edu/hsesi>

<sup>49</sup> University of California Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative "*Teaching Histories of Anti-Imperialist Solidarity*" video, 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfXSozH7J0Y>

<sup>50</sup> "One Struggle: Solidarity between the Palestinians and South African Peoples" artwork published by the Palestinian Liberation Organization Embassy in Tanzania, circa 1978, <https://www.palestineposterproject.org/posters/one-struggle-0>

[and] Chicano liberation if you're not simultaneously willing to sacrifice and struggle on behalf of the Palestinian people."

2. Recommends anti-Israel resources such as University of California Berkeley Ethnic Studies Associate Professor Keith Feldman's book "Shadow over Palestine" which critiques Zionism and Israel as settler colonialism; activist group Middle East Children's Alliance's "Teach Palestine" collection which advances that Israel is conducting an ongoing genocide and occupation of Palestine; and Ta-Nehisi Coates asserting that Palestinians live under an apartheid system imposed by Israel.<sup>51</sup>

In February 2026, UCB HSSP's partner the University of California Ethnic Studies Department co-produced an instructional video "Dismantling Anti-Palestinian Racism"<sup>52</sup> funded by a University of California Office of the President anti-bias grant. It advances that Palestinian racism stems from Western colonization of the Middle East, including the founding of Israel, which led to Palestinians' expulsion.

The video centers on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, criticizing:

- The university for inhibiting anti-Israel protestors,
- The United States for providing the weaponry to Israel to "terrorize" Palestinians, and
- Israel for launching "a genocidal war of ethnic cleansing" with the graphic "This is Genocide."

It recommends anti-Israel non-profit organizations Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and Students for Justice in Palestine as resources.

## Analysis

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) bars the funding of programs which discriminate on the basis of religion and national origin.<sup>53</sup> UCB HSSP's materials advance anti-Jewish (anti-Zionism) positions and resources.

ESEA also requires that grant funds used for professional development enable school sites to "prepare all students to meet the challenging State academic standards:"<sup>54</sup>

1. UCB HSSP's professional development content does not align with the California State Board of Education's History–Social Science Content Standards. It does not:
  - "Distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations,"
  - "Identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations,"
  - "Evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications,"
  - "Recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects," and
  - "Interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values."

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<sup>51</sup> University of California Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative's Resource Hub

<https://hsesi.notion.site/8c0d8dc3e8034f48b3f617fdb05c9d0?v=eec51bfcc4254182b3cecb565d42e16f>

<sup>52</sup> University of California Berkeley Department of Ethnic Studies video "Dismantling Anti-Palestinian Racism," 2026,

<https://ethnicstudies.berkeley.edu/resources/dismantling-anti-palestinian-racism>

<sup>53</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 8534 (Civil Rights), codified as 20 U.S.C. Section 7914.

<sup>54</sup> Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 2101(c)(4)(B)(viii) (State Uses of Funds), codified in 20 U.S.C. Section 6611(c)(4)(B)(viii).

2. UCB HSSP's professional development content also does not align with the California State Board of Education's Social Content Standards; it adversely reflects on Jews (Zionists), a minority group.

Moreover, the content is inconsistent with the California Constitution and University of California Regents' Bylaws which state that the University of California must be administered "entirely independent of all political or sectarian influence and kept free therefrom."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> California Constitution Article IX, Section 9(f) [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CONS&sectionNum=SEC.%209.&article=IX) and Regents of the University of California Bylaw 12 <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/bylaws/bl12.html>.