

Protocol for Response to Library Incidents: Cabinet Communication Guidelines

Endorsed by Library Cabinet, October 2023

The Library's [Protocol for Response to Library Incidents](#) outlines expectations for Cabinet members' roles and actions when challenging incidents arise. This document provides guidance on the behaviors and best practices that should be followed when Cabinet members communicate as part of these instances.

- A. Information communicated by Cabinet members in their professional (work) roles should follow the [Library's values](#) and/or [UC Berkeley's principles of community](#), and not their personal beliefs and opinions.
- B. Communications across all formats (email, town halls, media interviews, etc.) should use inclusive language. Special attention should be placed on thinking about how colleagues with varying perspectives and experiences might relate to and interpret the language. Haas has a long, but good, [inclusive language playbook](#), which can serve as a resource.
- C. Messages should be signed by Cabinet members whose role and/or portfolio has a relation to the incident and/or topic. Cabinet should refrain from sending messages on behalf of all members. The campus's May 2022 [Draft Report of The Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on The Role of the University and its Units in Political and Social Action](#) explains why group statements can be especially challenging, stating:

Department leaders should be aware that signing onto a majority statement or voicing dissent are not always a simple matter for members of a department, especially those with less power or seniority. Insisting that department members openly endorse or dissent from such statements may expose those in vulnerable positions to criticism or retaliation and may force others, who fear such retaliation, into concealing or misrepresenting their actual opinions.

When such a (signed) statement is released, the department must provide the opportunity for non-signing members of the department to express their dissenting or otherwise contrasting views on the same platform. Such communications should be clearly presented by the department as a forum for the views of department members who do not agree about a specific subject, to avoid the appearance of a free-for-all.

All such statements (majority or minority) should be formulated in a way that abides by the university's Principles of Community, with particular attention to the clause that calls for respect for "the differences as well as the commonalities that bring us together" and "civility and respect in our personal interactions."

D. Cabinet is encouraged to collaborate with thought partners from relevant groups (such as the Library Equity and Inclusion Committee), if relevant. However, as it is important to also act quickly, collaborators should be brought in after the pause or suspension of the activity has been communicated. Thought partners can be particularly helpful in bringing in new perspectives, representing more of the organization, determining next steps, and developing any restorative activities.