

Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Felix V. Matos Rodriguez
Chancellor of the City University of New York
205 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Governor Hochul and Chancellor Rodriguez:

We are writing to protest the recent action to suspend recruitment of two faculty positions in Palestinian studies at Hunter College. As the primary voice of the Hunter College faculty, the Faculty Delegate Assembly has an ongoing interest in maintaining the existence of an active faculty in major academic fields necessary for our students' education. At the same time, we are concerned to ensure the freedom of our faculty to pursue their teaching and writing as they deem appropriate, within the parameters of established and/or emerging academic fields.

It is deeply disturbing for nonacademic government officials to make decisions about the legitimacy or nonlegitimacy of whole academic fields, of which they have no apparent knowledge. This is even more concerning when such decisions are apparently based on the stigmatization of ethnic groups, deemed not worthy of study, as in this case.

As the Executive Committee of the FDA at Hunter College, we hasten to assert the continuing importance of academic freedom, including the hiring of faculty involved in the study of matters of current controversy (as affirmed by the American Association of University Professors). We urge you to rescind this recent action and allow the regular processes of academic hiring, teaching, and writing to continue. Failing to do so will set an unfortunate precedent of politicizing academic affairs, with the eventual result of undermining the intellectual integrity of Hunter College and the City University of New York as a whole.

Sincerely,

Executive Committee of the Faculty Delegate Assembly
Hunter College of the City University of New York

Omar Dahbour, President
Peter Dudek, Vice President
Lisa Finder
Bo Gao
Elke Nicolai
Debbie Sonu
Michaela Soyer

Cc: Nancy Cantor, President of Hunter College
William Thompson, Chair of the CUNY Board of Trustees