



UWM statement on free speech and campus protests

We have all witnessed a growing number of UWM students, employees and community members gather to make their voices heard. The vast majority of protests on UWM's campus during the last several months have been peaceful and lawful, and UWM is steadfast in respecting the right to free speech. At the same time, it is critical that we maintain a safe and welcoming environment for our students, employees and visitors.

Today, students and community members gathered again on campus to protest. Unlike prior protests, an encampment was set up. Camping on campus grounds is unlawful and violates [Chapter 18 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: UWS 18.07\(4\)](#). This expansion of protest activity conflicts with guidance UWM shared in a [message with students, faculty and staff Monday morning](#).

UWM also received a series of demands from protesters. While many of these concerns have been addressed in meetings between UWM administrators and students and in some prior communications, we want to share this information with our broader campus community.

First, UWM has expressed in campus messages and meetings with students that we share in the heartbreak felt by our community and many around the world. We reiterate our call for an end to the violence by joining the White House and international leaders in calling for a release of the hostages and a ceasefire. We say this knowing that, as a public university, we have no direct ability to impact the outcomes of the war in Gaza. We also know that many of our Jewish, Palestinian, Muslim and Arab American community members are suffering as they watch loved ones directly and indirectly harmed by this war.

We want to reiterate that UWM has no investments in weapons manufacturers. Unlike some private institutions that have investments, UWM is funded with a combination of state funding, tuition, program revenue and grants. The UWM Foundation is a separate legal entity from UWM, and UWM cannot control the foundation's investments. Regardless, those investments are through mutual funds. The foundation cannot disinvest from individual companies within those funds.

UWM has also been called to suspend any academic relationship with institutions or entities in Israel. While UWM does not have any active study abroad programs with universities in Israel, prohibiting faculty from engaging with any institution or country would infringe on their academic freedom. Although we understand the protesters' desire for the safety and peace of all those in Gaza, stifling academic freedom or free speech would not accomplish that goal.

We ask again that people respect each other's diverse viewpoints as well as the laws so that we can all feel safe and welcome here.



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