



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
THINKING OF THE WORLD

To: Senate
From: Sam Black
Senator
Date: June 27, 2007
Subject: Boycott Motion

Background:

The University and College Union (UCU) is the largest trade union and professional association for academics, lecturers, trainers, researchers and academic-related staff working in further and higher education throughout the UK. At its annual conference on May 30, 2007 the University and College Union passed a motion calling on UK academics to "consider the moral implications of existing and proposed links with Israeli academic institutions". The motion was passed by 158 votes to 99. The motion was in response to the Israeli state's treatment of Palestinians. The UCU web site currently states that: "Following a meeting of the UCU's national executive committee on Friday 8 June, the union has confirmed that it is now considering the necessary steps for members to be able to debate the arguments for and against an academic boycott of Israeli universities. This does not mean an academic boycott is in place, it means that individual branches will debate the pros and cons of boycott." (See <http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2622>)

Evaluation:

- 1) An academic boycott conflicts with the free exchange of ideas and research that is central to the mission of colleges and universities. A boycott consequently comprises a serious violation of academic freedom.
- 2) The University community has a special obligation to make its views known to the public on controversial issues that are central to the University's mission.
- 3) It is appropriate that its President represent the University on this serious matter.

Motion:

Senate authorizes the Chair of Senate to express disapproval on behalf of Senate of the contemplated boycott of Israeli academic institutions by the University and College Union of the UK.

Senate recommends that the Chair of Senate's statement appear on the University's web site in a prominent and accessible position.