



March 23, 2016

Dear California State University (CSU) Faculty and Students,

We understand that CSU faculty are preparing to withhold their labor in a five-day system-wide strike on April 13-15 and 18-19, 2016. As volunteers with local chapters of the ACLU of Northern California, spanning as far north as the Oregon border and as far south as the Central Coast and Central Valley, we work to ensure everyone in this country knows their rights so they can execute them freely. We are writing this letter so that you have practical information about your rights to free speech and protest.

Freedom of speech is a constitutional guarantee protected by the First Amendment. All campuses should adhere to First Amendment principles because academic freedom is a bedrock of education in a free society. The mission of a university is to facilitate learning through open debate and study, and to enlighten. All views are entitled to be heard, explored, supported or refuted.

Freedom of the press, protected by the First Amendment, is critical to a democracy in which the government is accountable to the people. A free media functions as a watchdog that can investigate and report on government wrongdoing. It is also a vibrant marketplace of ideas, a vehicle for ordinary citizens to express themselves and gain exposure to a wide range of information and opinions. And your right to protest means you can dissent, demonstrate, and make your voice heard.

In the United States, students do not lose their constitutional rights “at the schoolhouse gate.” The protection of students’ constitutional rights – in and out of school – is essential for ensuring that schools provide both quality education and training in our democratic system and values.

For more detailed information about your rights, please see the attached guide. These freedoms are protected by the U.S. and California constitutions, and it is up to all of us to uphold them.

If you feel that your rights are being violated, please contact the ACLU legal intake line at (415) 621-2488 or online at www.aclunc.org/get-help.

Signed,

Berkeley/North-East Bay Chapter
Chico Chapter
Monterey County Chapter
Sacramento Area Chapter
San Francisco Chapter

San Joaquin County Chapter
Santa Clara Valley Chapter
Santa Cruz County Chapter
Sonoma County Chapter
Yolo County Chapter