



September 22, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL: hawgoods@ucsf.edu, chancellor@ucsf.edu

University of California, San Francisco
Office of the Chancellor, Box 0402
550 16th Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94143

RE: Termination of Rupa Marya and Suppression of Speech

Dear Chancellor Hawgood:

My name is Hibah Hammoudeh, and I am the Civil Rights Coordinator at the San Francisco Bay Area office of the Council on American Islamic Relations, California Chapter ("CAIR-SFBA"). CAIR is the nation's largest American Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. Our mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

I write today regarding the unjust termination of Dr. Rupa Marya, recently employed at University of California, San Francisco ("UCSF"). It has come to our attention that in September 2024, Dr. Marya was initially placed on investigatory leave and had her medical privileges suspended for allegedly violating the faculty code of conduct with her social media posts. UCSF has claimed that this professor is an "imminent danger to patients," although she has not had any patient safety issues in all 22 years of her employment at UCSF. On May 20, 2025, Dr. Rupa Marya was served with a notice of termination after an Ad Hoc Committee found that her speech violated the Faculty Code of Conduct.

According to the Committee's report, Dr. Rupa Marya was censured and terminated based on social media activity that university officials claimed had created a "hostile environment" and disrupted the learning environment. The posts in question, made in September 2024, reportedly criticized a UCSF first-year medical student and, more broadly, colleagues whom Dr. Marya disagreed with politically. The Committee further alleged that Jewish students and faculty felt marginalized or harassed, though the evidence cited consisted largely of subjective interpretations and anonymous complaints. The report alludes to the potential for harm to patients, however, no actual evidence or incidents of threat, incitement, or patient harm was ever presented.

Despite Dr. Marya's extensive record as a physician, teacher, and advocate for more than two decades, her critiques of institutional and political systems, particularly concerning issues of global injustice and public health, were deemed to "significantly impair a central function of the University." She was also accused of violating UCSF's Violence and Bullying Policy and Electronic Communications Policy based on a pattern of speech that the university claimed had an intimidating or exclusionary effect.

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UCSF's behavior of targeting expressive conduct, particularly speech critical of Zionism and United States foreign policy, raises grave civil rights concerns.

As you may know, CAIR-SFBA regularly represents members from Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian ("AMEMSA") communities in high-stakes disputes involving the exercise of their civil and religious liberties. It is in this capacity that we are sharing concerns that the AMEMSA community has with the treatment of this professor. The university's treatment and investigation of Dr. Rupa Marya reflects an atmosphere of intolerance and exclusion. We stand firmly to uphold and protect the expressive rights of both faculty and students. Decisions that punish protected political speech, particularly speech critical of government policies, run counter to those values and erode the foundations of an unprejudiced university.

We respectfully urge the university to:

1. **Rescind the termination** and restore Dr. Marya to her post without delay.
2. **Disclose the evidentiary basis** for any disciplinary measures already imposed, consistent with governing labor agreements and principles of transparency.
3. **Affirm publicly** that UCSF will safeguard the First Amendment and academic-freedom rights of all community members, including critics of U.S. or foreign government policies.
4. **Engage affected stakeholders**, including CAIR-SFBA, faculty representatives, and student organizations, to develop clear guidelines that protect safety without silencing dissent.

We are of course happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss constructive steps forward.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Hibah Hammoudeh

Hibah Hammoudeh
Civil Rights Coordinator
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cc: Dean Talmadge King, talmadge.king@ucsf.edu
Department of Medicine Chair Robert Wachter, robert.wachter@ucsf.edu
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