

MAHG Program Statement on the First Week of the Trump Presidency

The MAHG program, as indicated in our mission statement, "is committed to innovative and challenging research and teaching on the Holocaust, other genocides, the prevention of mass atrocities, and the promotion of human rights."

This mission is incredibly urgent these days, as the current US government, based on what we all saw this past week, is committed to a racist political discourse, to the violation of human rights, and to an assault against groups in our society that we teach our students regularly to notice as a red flag for worse to come.

The second Trump presidency began with Elon Musk's very clear two Nazi salutes. We condemn this brazen and violent gesture by Musk at an inaugural event, but we are equally disturbed and angry that the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) dismissed it as an "awkward hand gesture in a moment of enthusiasm, not a Nazi salute." This denial of what we all saw with our own eyes is unacceptable and dangerous. We teach our students about the "lessons of the Holocaust." One clear and simple lesson is that Nazis are as bad as it gets. Maybe the ADL missed that class, so we are screaming this lesson today!

Then came the avalanche of executive orders, the toxic attacks on LGBTQI+ people, the ICE raids on undocumented and forcibly displaced people, and the attempt to deprive Americans of their birthright citizenship, including the unashamed assault against the right of Indigenous people to live in their homeland, an assault that figures in the centuries-long and ongoing settler-colonial genocide against them.

We know that this administration is also planning to intensify further the attack on colleges and universities that began during the Biden administration; to criminalize anti-genocide and pro-Palestinian teaching and activism; to remove the little that remains of academic freedom; and to intimidate and silence faculty, students, and staff.

We therefore call on other faculty members and staff to join the MAHG program and affirm our commitment to saying, loud and clear, NO to state violence, NO to racism, NO to Nazi salutes, NO to denigrating people as "illegals," and NO to fascism and to fascists. There are no "two sides" when it comes to these matters --- that, too, is a lesson of the Holocaust.

We are committed to acting together to protect everyone in the MAHG program and at Stockton. We cannot teach our students "never to be bystanders" and remain silent and passive in the face of the danger of ICE raids on our campus and in the face of LGBTQI+ students dreading what tomorrow will bring.

We are committed to developing further our collaboration with the Lenape people --- we are on their land, on their stolen land, on their homeland.

And we are committed to continue studying, writing, and teaching about mass violence in the past and in the present, including --- and especially these days --- in the United States.

Fascism thrives on lies --- we will insist, together, day after day, on the truth.

And we will remain committed to our mission. "Never Again" means never again for anyone!
Never again is now!