

On February 24, 2026, the Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against UCLA based on allegations of antisemitism.

In recent months, reporting by [The New York Times](#), [The Los Angeles Times](#), and [ProPublica / Chronicle of Higher Education](#) – based on interviews with more than 60 former Justice Department attorneys and internal documents – describe the weaponization of the DOJ against UCLA. Career officials allege that certain civil rights investigations were politically directed, procedurally compressed, and outcome-driven.

The following includes key excerpts from this reporting:

Public Conclusions Preceding Investigations

Ejaz Baluch, former senior trial attorney in the Civil Rights Division:

“Initially we were told we only had 30 days to come up with a reason to be ready to sue UC. It shows just how unserious this exercise was. It was not about trying to find out what really happened.” ([LAT](#))

“We were told what the outcome will be: ‘You have one month to find evidence to justify a lawsuit and draft a complaint against the UC system.’”

([ProPublica](#))

Jen Swedish, former deputy chief of the Employment Litigation Section:

“The end goal was to file a damn complaint — or have something to threaten the university.” ([ProPublica](#))



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Weak or Predetermined Evidence

Dena Robinson, former senior trial attorney:

“They’d already reached their conclusion. They continued instructing my colleague to just find the evidence for it.” ([NYT](#))

“He [Deputy Assistant Attorney General Michael Gates] didn’t know what the holdup was in getting back to them on which university could be sued.”

([ProPublica](#))

Internal DOJ Memo:

“We simply do not have strong evidence that the types of harassing acts that happened through spring 2024 are ongoing.” ([ProPublica](#))

Ejaz Baluch, former senior trial attorney in the Civil Rights Division:

“We believed that such a lawsuit had significant weaknesses.”

([ProPublica](#))

Unprecedented Financial Demands and Judicial Pushback

DOJ **demanded between \$1 and \$1.2B** from UCLA and froze hundreds of millions in research grants.

Ejaz Baluch, former senior trial attorney in the Civil Rights Division:

“We thought, \$1 billion? They are making that up out of thin air. There is no way the damages we found added up to anything like that amount.” (NYT)

Zachary A. Cunha, former US attorney:

“It’s hard to know where these large and somewhat arbitrary numbers are coming from.” (ProPublica)

US District Judge Rita F. Lin later ruled that the administration’s approach was:

“Coercive and retaliatory”

Concerns from Jewish Faculty Whose Complaints Were Cited

Some Jewish faculty members who experienced antisemitism expressed concern about how their cases and testimonials were used.

Ron Avi Astor, UCLA professor:

“These are things that save people’s lives. Why are we messing with that? ... It looks like we’re being used.” ([ProPublica](#))

Dena Robinson, former senior trial attorney:

“I am highly skeptical of whether this administration actually cares about Jewish people or antisemitism.” ([ProPublica](#))