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NEWS BRIEF

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025 — 10:44 AM

Judge bars Trump from threatening to cut University of California funding

A federal judge on Friday ordered the Trump administration not to threaten federal funding to the University of California or impose fines on UC in connection

with civil rights investigations, decrying the administration's pressure on the university system as "coercive and retaliatory conduct" that chills free speech.

The order from U.S. District Judge Rita F. Lin is a sharp rejection of the federal government's efforts to overhaul elite universities, which the administration accuses of harboring antisemitism and indoctrinating students. The Trump administration has repeatedly launched civil rights investigations into high-profile universities and then halted federal funding as a tactic in settlement talks.

The court's decision could shift the balance of power in the Trump administration's negotiations with UC, which receives roughly \$17 billion in federal funding annually. The U.S. Department of Justice in August demanded a \$1 billion payout from UCLA as a condition to reinstate millions of dollars in suspended federal research funding. In a separate case, Lin previously ordered the White House to restore a portion of the scientific research grants.

Lin's Nov. 14 decision in the lawsuit brought by labor unions and other groups argued that the Trump administration has "engaged in a concerted campaign to purge" viewpoints with which it disagrees from universities by cutting federal funding, "with the goal of bringing universities to their knees and forcing them to change their ideological tune." At UC, she wrote, faculty say they have already altered what they teach and research in hopes of avoiding more funding cancellations.

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