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Judge: Trump Administration Can't 'Blanket' Deny UC New Grants or Demand Payout

By [Ryan Quinn](#)

Another court ruling has gone in favor of the University of California, Los Angeles.

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A judge ordered federal agencies Friday to end their “blanket policy of denying any future grants” to the University of California, Los Angeles, and further ruled that the Trump administration can’t seek payouts from any UC campus “in connection with any civil rights investigation” under Titles VI or IX of federal law.

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The ruling also prohibits the Department of Justice and federal funding agencies from withholding funds, “or threatening to do so, to coerce the UC in violation of the First Amendment or Tenth Amendment.” In all, the order, if not overturned on appeal, stops the administration’s attempt to pressure UCLA to pay \$1.2 billion and make multiple other concessions, including to stop enrolling “foreign students likely to engage in anti-Western, anti-American, or antisemitic disruptions or harassment” and stop “performing hormonal interventions and ‘transgender’ surgeries” on anyone under 18 at its medical school and affiliated hospitals.

The administration’s targeting of the UC system came to the fore on July 29. That’s when the DOJ said its months-long investigations across the system had so far concluded that UCLA violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in its response to alleged antisemitism at a spring 2024 pro-Palestinian protest encampment.

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Federal agencies—including the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation and Department of Energy—quickly began freezing funding; UC estimated it lost \$564 million. But UC researchers sued and, even before Friday’s ruling, U.S. District

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Court judge Rita F. Lin of the Northern District of California ordered the restoration of almost all of the frozen funding.

Friday's ruling came in a case filed this fall by the American Association of University Professors, the affiliated American Federation of Teachers and other unions. Lin again was the judge.

"Defendants did not engage in the required notice and hearing processes under Title VI for cutting off funds for alleged discrimination," she wrote.

"With every day that passes, UCLA continues to be denied the chance to win new grants, ratchetting [*sic*] up Defendants' pressure campaign," she wrote. "And numerous UC faculty and staff have submitted declarations describing how Defendants' actions have already chilled speech throughout the UC system. They describe how they have stopped teaching or researching topics they are afraid are too 'left' or 'woke,' in order to avoid triggering further funding cancellations by Defendants. They also give examples of projects the UC has stopped due to fear of the same reprisals. These are classic, predictable First Amendment harms, and exactly what Defendants publicly said that they intended."

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