January 14, 2014

An Open Letter on the American Studies Association Anti-Israel Boycott

The administration of The University of Nevada, Las Vegas opposes the boycott of Israeli universities endorsed by the American Studies Association. Any boycott of any academic institution would violate the principles of academic freedom and inclusiveness, which are aims of all higher education in America. No academic institution should be off-limits because of nationality.

Faculty and students should be able to research and obtain knowledge without constraint for political concerns. All faculty and students have the right to feel safe to express their beliefs at institutions of higher learning.

Academic institutions should not promote political concerns if it comes at the expense of students and faculty. Meaningful research and scholarship can come from the expression of ideas and knowledge across borders and over political differences.

Although the resolution in support of the boycott states that “the American Studies Association is dedicated to the right of students and scholars to pursue education and research without undue state interference,” any boycott would harm that right for both Israeli and American scholars.

We urge universities and scholars in America and around the world who are committed to the ideals of academic freedom to oppose this boycott and all academic boycotts.

Sincerely,

John Valery White
Executive Vice President and Provost