



**Item 4**

**University Affairs Board 2004-05  
Vice-Provost Students' Report # 3**

**Events Organized by the Arab Students' Collective** (January 31 to February 4, 2005)  
During the week of January 31<sup>st</sup>, the Arab Students' Collective, a recognized campus group, organized a series of events as part of what the group called "Israeli Apartheid Week." Concerns about the name of the events and the presumed content were raised by some members of the community. Several external organizations urged the University to prevent the events from occurring or force the Arab Students' Collective to change the nature of its activities.

Upon review of the group's plans, the administration determined that it had no reason to believe that the events would exceed the boundaries for free speech as articulated in the Statement on Freedom of Speech and other relevant University policies. Furthermore, the administration continues to believe that is critically important for the University to uphold the fundamental principles of open dialogue and tolerance within its community. The ability to question, examine and comment on issues of the day, even when such commentary may be repugnant to some, is central to the mission of the University. The very fact that the Arab Students' Collective and other campus groups exist speaks to a central value of the University of Toronto. As an academic community, we have a fundamental commitment to the principles of freedom of inquiry, freedom of speech and freedom of association. In this context, campus groups avail themselves of campus facilities for activities.

Members of the University Affairs Board have previously received a copy of the administration's statement on this matter. More information about this decision and a copy of the statement can be found on the Internet at <http://www.news.utoronto.ca/bin6/050119-881.asp>.

Although, as one would expect, there were disagreements between individuals on both sides of the Israel-Palestine debate, the events occurred without disruption. However, the University also has received a number of specific complaints about some of the content of the activities and events. The grievances, which include allegations that some elements of the week constitute incitement of hatred, are being treated seriously by the administration and are under investigation.