

April 6, 2025

President Michael V. Drake
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[Delivered via Email]

Dear President Drake, Provost Newman, Senate Chair Cheung, and Chancellors,

The Council of University of California Faculty Associations and University Council-AFT Local 1474 urgently call upon UCOP to address the revocation of visas and deportation of international students at the University of California. It has been reported that in the past week alone, at least 44 students across the UC system have had their I-20 Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record terminated by the Department of Homeland Security, with at least one deportation occurring.

These detentions and visa revocations are taking place without warning, and without the University being able to inform visa holders in a timely way that their legal status to remain in the U.S. has been terminated. Sudden terminations of legal status, visa revocations, and detainment or deportation are violations of constitutional rights to freedom of speech and due process. The cases across the University of California and elsewhere suggest there is no consistent pattern or logic to visa revocations and status terminations. The pretexts for the termination of legal status ostensibly draw from Secretary of State Marco Rubio's warning that students who have engaged in criminalized political activity or political speech would be targeted for visa revocation first, yet some visas have been revoked for minor and non-political offenses, including a wrongful arrest where charges were completely dismissed. The federal government has not explained the reasons behind these terminations.

International students—approximately 50,000 across the UC as well as international scholars, faculty, and staff—are an invaluable part of the University of California and communities across California. We are deeply concerned about their safety and well-being. Our students are living in fear and uncertainty, and understandably so. This fear is not just about the concrete possibility of legal status termination and all that implies, but also potential detainment or deportation, or needing to suddenly leave the U.S. and have one's life upended. There is also the fear and uncertainty that social media posts, long-past arrests, or even temporary holds on a visa holder's student account might result in erroneous or random visa revocations, with little oversight. These abrupt and apparently arbitrary cancellations throw students' and scholars' lives into crisis.

As faculty at the University of California, we insist that UC has a moral obligation to protect students and scholars' legal rights against this treatment. In recruiting these students and scholars to UC, we implicitly assured them that the U.S. in general, and UC in particular, would be their new academic home. We have drawn strength from their ideas, work and energy, and we owe them the

same efforts in return. Moreover, supporting these students and scholars is a practical imperative. UC's global prestige depends in large part on our being an attractive home to the best minds in the world. If we look away from what our government is subjecting them to, rather than rushing in with support, we can be sure that no one with a choice in the future will choose UC. We are surprised and disappointed by the weak assurances of the [UCOP letter issued on April 4](#) that provides only a vague assessment of the "fluid situation" and a vague commitment to "doing what we can to support all members of our community," with no concrete commitment to policies or resources to materially support international students, scholars, staff, and faculty.

We call on UCOP to guarantee the following, and to immediately develop policies and put in place resources to ensure their timely implementation:

First, the University should guarantee that each campus can and will provide legal support for those whose visas are revoked.

Second, UC must ensure that any student whose visa and/or legal status is revoked and who is either detained or deported can remain enrolled at their campus and can remotely continue their program of study until its completion, whether undergraduate or graduate.

Third, if any student or scholar receiving a fellowship, stipend, or salary from the University is deported, they continue to receive that funding until the end of their contract or relevant course of study.

Fourth, any staff or faculty member whose visa is revoked and who is detained and/or deported be given the opportunity to work remotely, to remain on the payroll and continue to receive their salary.

Fifth, the University, as sponsor of the legal status of international students and scholars, seek action in the federal courts to halt termination of legal status without due process or prior communication to the University.

We reiterate [our call](#) to University leadership to refuse to comply with or otherwise aid in any orders to disclose personal information of students, scholars, staff, or faculty or otherwise cooperate with the Trump Administration, DOJ, DHS, ICE or other government agencies involved in the investigation, prosecution, or deportation of members of the UC community. Other universities, from Princeton to the University of Minnesota and Tufts University, have refused to acquiesce; we expect no less from the country's leading public university.

We call upon you to develop, implement, and publicize a plan regarding these issues as soon as possible. We further call upon the systemwide and divisional Academic Senates to address this issue independently from University leadership. We ask that they apply appropriate pressure on the University to ensure it meets its obligations to all students, staff, and faculty regardless of any threats from the Trump Administration.

Fiat Lux,

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