

Dear Colleagues and Students,

This past Monday, July 6, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) directed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to bar, from remaining in the United States, all international students attending universities in this country whose fall courses are exclusively online or virtual because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the president of Cal State San Bernardino, please know that I decry the needless malice and blatant disregard for public health and safety behind this order's insistence that U.S. universities open campuses for face-to-face instruction. The proposed alternative, forcing international students to leave the U.S. in the middle of the pandemic, not only creates additional health risks for these students but also disrupts their studies as some might not have access to technologies that would allow them to continue their coursework online and who might have difficulty obtaining visas to return to campus once the university resumes normal operations. CSUSB's senior leadership and I remain committed to protecting access of our international students to the education they have chosen to pursue here at CSUSB and are taking action to ensure that no international student will be harmed by this sudden directive.

Since I came to CSUSB, I have spoken on numerous occasions about the importance of international education, both for U.S. students to study abroad and for international students to study here in the U.S. Access to diverse cultures and ideas is integral to the educational experience, boosts student success and enriches the lives of everyone involved. The U.S. has benefitted substantially from the presence of international students on our university campuses and has established our nation as a beacon for global cooperation as well as a destination for the free sharing of ideas and information. It has also undergirded the U.S.' standing as an entrepreneurial juggernaut and economic force, and the economic rewards have been substantial. To ignore this is both to ignore the data and facts of history and to cripple our nation's future.

Since this spring, CSUSB has been working diligently on actions to protect its students, faculty and staff in the face of an ongoing pandemic. This has meant shifting the means by which our classes are offered, in order to ensure the safety of everyone. COVID-19 has disrupted and will continue to disrupt lives until a viable vaccine has been created and inserting an arbitrary and capricious action by DHS and ICE into the chaos of the present moment is discriminatory and cruel and only causes further harm.

We are committed to our values of diversity and inclusivity here at CSUSB, and that includes a denunciation of xenophobia and bigotry, regardless of the source. The university's senior leadership and I will have zero tolerance of, and vociferously protest, this decision by DHS and ICE. To our international students, please know that you are fully members of the CSUSB community, which means that not only are you Coyotes for life, we recognize that you are enrolled Coyotes and we are doing everything that we can so that you are able to continue your studies here at CSUSB.

Sincerely,  
Tomás D. Morales  
President

