

First Statement on DACA repeal by the Fresno State English faculty

We, the undersigned English Faculty at Fresno State, condemn the decision by President Trump to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and stand with our students whose lives are severely affected by that decision. The program has provided a pathway for students, here and around the country, to study and earn college degrees, to work, to contribute to their communities, and to plan for the future. The end to the DACA program imperils all those goals, and we believe that it will have a serious toll on our students' lives, minds, and bodies.

To all our students, we say: We stand in solidarity with undocumented students, Dreamers, and all students who are affected by the repeal of DACA.

We pledge our commitment to support and protect our students in any way possible. In addition to this statement of solidarity, the department is researching all the ways we can be in support of you and uphold the university administration's promises to defend students. We are seeking information and training that will enable us to help protect your rights against raids, etc. We are also committed to finding and disseminating resources to you, and aiding in your understanding of the materials.

To our colleagues and to the administration:

We commend and fully support President Castro's commitment to continue to allow California residents who are Dreamers to pay in-state tuition; to maintain the DREAM loan program for financial aid; to offer legal services to our undocumented students; and to support campus-based student service centers.

We call on administration of California State University and, specifically, of California State University, Fresno to:

- guarantee student privacy by refusing to release information regarding the Immigration status of our students;
- refuse to comply with immigration authorities regarding deportations or raids;
- refuse I.C.E. physical access to all land owned or controlled by the CSU;
- offer over-break housing for students who cannot return home due to fear of deportation;
- find existing resources and/or continue to pursue special funds segregated from federal monies to support legal action on behalf of and guarantee in-state tuition for students previously deemed DACA recipients, as well as continue operation of campus-based Dream Centers.
- To clarify what apparatus and protocols are in place to protect our students
- Offer trainings to the campus community in the event of unauthorized access

To the administration, we ask the following questions and make a request:

- Does the university have a protocol for what will happen if government officials are on campus?
- How long will it take for our campus to mobilize to protect students?

--Are Fresno State Police trained and standing by to keep government officials from being on campus?

--If faculty participate in civil resistance and action, what is the university's commitment to its faculty and staff?

-- We ask for the formation of a rapid response team comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators, with a centralized contact

As teachers of English literature, we strive to share with our students texts that encourage us all to enter unexplored or otherwise inaccessible worlds of experience. Literary, rhetorical, and creative writing teaches compassion, teaches empathy. Our country's administration lacks compassion and empathy and has engaged in hateful rhetoric against immigrants, the undocumented, and Dreamers. This rhetoric and the resulting rescinding of DACA are a direct attack on many of our students' ability to work, study, and take advantage of the opportunities our university has to offer. The goal of such rhetoric stands in direct opposition to our goals as English professors. The end of DACA diminishes the future of our students and dangerously destabilizes their lives.

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