

NASPA Priorities for International Students

Policies and pathways for international individuals that promote inclusion, institutional productivity, and student success are essential to maintaining the competitiveness of our colleges and universities as well as our students in the workforce. While a growing number of institutions offer a variety of avenues that increase access for international individuals, changes in the national policy landscape contributes to a growing culture of uncertainty. NASPA supports policies that foster the full participation of immigrants and international students, faculty, and staff in our institutions, that lessens ambiguity and negative impacts to students and the services to support them, and that creates a more robust and inclusive higher education community.

NASPA priorities related to international students, faculty, and staff include:

Continued protection of all B, F, J, and M visa holders. The Presidential Proclamation “Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats,¹” known colloquially as the third iteration of the travel ban, threatens B, F, J, and M visa holders from seven countries. International and exchange students and scholars fall under F, J, or M visa categories, while short-term visits by students or scholars often fall under the tourist (B) visa category. While this iteration of the executive order protects F, J, and M visas under a “bona fide” status, visa holders from these countries may be subject to additional screening, and tourist B visas remain restricted. Limiting travel and discouraging entry of visa holders in these seven countries is discriminatory and restricts U.S. scholars and from opportunities to engage with and learn from world-class experts around the country.

Oppose reductions to the H1b visa program. Recipients of H1b visas continue to be engaged in the graduate higher education community and contribute to the competitiveness of the United States in the global economy.

Oppose enhanced social media vetting for nonimmigrant visa holders. A recent proposal by the State Department to gather expanded collection of personal information through social media will prove excessively burdensome in the visa application process. These policies may hinder the competitiveness of the U.S. in higher education and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) field research by deterring international talent.

Oppose unfairly punitive overstay visa policies. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services policy memorandum² introduced in May will change the way visa

¹ <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-09-27/pdf/2017-20899.pdf>

² https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Outreach/Draft%20Memorandum%20for%20Comment/AccrualofUnlawfulPresenceFJMNonimmigrantsMEMO_v2.pdf



overstays are calculated starting in August 2018. Under the new policy international students would begin accrual of unlawful presence the day after the reason for their visa ends, without formal notice, and be subject to up to a 10-year ban from the country of which they have overstayed. This policy is unfairly punitive and unnecessarily increases the criminalization of lawful immigrants.

Oppose significant burden to institutions regarding the vetting of Chinese international students. While NASPA supports measures to ensure the overall security of the United States, substantial policy changes that pose a significant burden to institutions with high percentages of international students may become excessive to a point those institutions are no longer able to thrive.

Continue humanitarian asylum policies and relief for immigrant and international students fleeing personal and political violence. Recent developments by the Department of Justice limit opportunities for asylum of immigrants fleeing their home countries due to domestic or gang violence. NASPA supports policies that provide relief for these individuals deserving of asylum.

About NASPA

NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. Student affairs is a critical component of the higher education experience, collaborating with colleagues across institutions of higher education to offer students valuable learning opportunities, meaningful social engagements, and safe and inclusive environments. NASPA’s Public Policy Agenda is grounded in a commitment to ensuring opportunity for all institutional members’ students and a belief that higher education is a great benefit to both individuals and society.

