



National Association  
of Independent  
Colleges and Universities

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October 26, 2020

Sharon Hageman  
Acting Regulatory Unit Chief  
Office of Policy and Planning  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  
Department of Homeland Security  
500 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20536

**Re: DHS Docket # ICEB-2019-0006 Establishing a Fixed Time Period of Admission and an Extension of Stay Procedure for Nonimmigrant Academic Students, Exchange Visitors, and Representatives of Foreign Information Media**

Dear Acting Chief Hageman:

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) and the associations and institutions listed below, to comment on the recent Department of Homeland Security (DHS) proposal to establish a fixed time period for admission and extension of stay for international students. According to the Institute for International Education, in 2018-19, there were more than 400,000 foreign students enrolled at private, nonprofit colleges and universities in the U.S. NAICU institutions welcome international students to study at our campuses reflecting a strong commitment to a global network of scholars. Students and faculty from around the world share ideas and dialogue, and contribute to a diverse world-wide education system.

NAICU serves as the unified national voice of independent higher education that reflects the diversity of private, nonprofit higher education in the U.S. Our member institutions include major research universities, faith-based colleges, historically black colleges and universities, minority-serving institutions, art and design colleges, traditional liberal arts and science institutions, women's colleges, two-year colleges, and schools of law, medicine, engineering, business, and other professions. With more than 5 million students attending 1,700 independent colleges and universities in all 50 states, and more than 1 million employees, the private sector of American higher education has a dramatic impact on our nation's larger public interests.

The recent DHS proposal to establish a fixed time period for admission and extension of stay for international students would be exceedingly problematic for our students and institutions. While we understand and appreciate DHS's efforts to curtail fraud and abuse of certain visa holders in the U.S., such efforts should be handled and addressed by the current SEVIS system, which was established for the very purpose of tracking student and exchange visitors to the U.S.

The proposal to limit periods of stay in the U.S. to two- and four-years will seriously impact many of our international students who would now be unlikely to enroll or return to our campuses if they believe the new limitations will keep them from reaching their ultimate educational goals. These students will also face the stress and uncertainty of not knowing if the

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extension of stay process will allow them to finish their degrees. For example, while our institutions offer two- and four-year degree programs, most international students at two-year private colleges go on to get four-year or advanced degrees. Limiting those students to a two-year degree will undermine their educational plan.

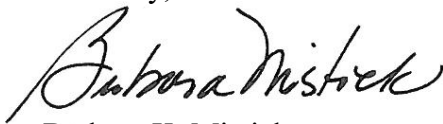
In addition, many international students attending four-year institutions are pursuing advanced degrees, including Masters, PhD's, MD's, and others. Many four-year institutions also offer five-year undergraduate programs. All of these students would be affected and would face the uncertainty of whether their stay in the U.S. will be extended by DHS so they can complete their degrees.

NAICU strongly disagrees with both the proposal that DHS should be the sole determiner of whether a student's status will be extended and the absence of an appeals process. Certainly the college or university should have a say in whether a student is making acceptable academic progress, and students who are denied an extension of status should have the right to an appeal. We strongly believe that the current system of allowing students to stay in the U.S. on active visas should be based on their educational plan, adherence to the terms of their visa, and include the possibility of Optional Practical Training which only enhances their educational experience.

Finally, placing additional costs, burdens, and uncertainties on students and U.S. colleges and universities during a pandemic-related recession will have a devastating economic impact in an already difficult educational environment. Continuing to educate researchers, scientists, medical professionals and students in other critical professions and allowing multicultural learning about differing ideas, faiths, and communities should remain top priorities for the U.S. We urge DHS to take this into consideration when drafting a final rule on these matters.

Thank you for considering our comments. I would be happy to provide any additional information that would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Barbara K. Mistick  
President

On behalf of:

Albertus Magnus College  
Albion College  
Albright College  
Allegheny College  
Alma College

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Amherst College  
Andrew College  
Anna Maria College  
Antioch University  
Antioch University  
Art Academy of Cincinnati  
Asociación de Colegios y Universidades Privadas de Puerto Rico (ACUP) / Association of Private Colleges and Universities of Puerto Rico (ACUP)  
Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools  
Association of Chiropractic Colleges  
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities  
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts  
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in New Jersey  
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio  
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania  
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island  
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design  
Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities  
Association of Vermont Independent Colleges  
Augsburg University  
Austin College  
Avila University  
Azusa Pacific University  
Bates College  
Be'er Yaakov Talmudic Seminary  
Belhaven University  
Bellarmine University  
Bennett College  
Beulah Heights University  
Boston College  
Boston University  
Brandeis University  
Brewton-Parker College  
Briar Cliff University  
Bryn Mawr College  
Buena Vista University  
Butler University  
Cabrini University  
Cairn University  
California College of the Arts  
California Institute of the Arts  
California Lutheran University  
Calvin University  
Campbellsville University

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Carnegie Mellon University  
Centenary College of Louisiana  
Central Christian College of Kansas  
Chaminade University of Honolulu  
Charlotte Christian College and Theological Seminary  
Chestnut Hill College  
Claremont School of Theology  
Clarks Summit University  
Clarkson University  
Coe College  
Coker University  
Colby-Sawyer College  
Colgate University  
College of the Holy Cross  
Columbus College of Art & Design  
Concordia University Nebraska  
Conference for Mercy Higher Education  
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area  
Converse College  
Cornell College (Mt. Vernon, IA)  
Cottey College  
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities  
Council of Independent Colleges  
Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia  
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges  
Daemen College  
Dean College  
Defiance College  
Denison University  
DePaul University  
DePauw University  
Donnelly College  
Drake University  
Drew University  
Drexel University  
Duke University  
Eckerd College  
Elon University  
Emmanuel College, Boston  
Emmaus Bible College  
Ensign College  
Eureka College  
Fontbonne University  
Franklin & Marshall College

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Friends University  
Furman University  
Geneva College  
George Fox University  
Georgia Independent College Association  
Golden Gate University  
Gonzaga University  
Goucher College  
Grand View University  
Great Lakes Colleges Association  
Gustavus Adolphus College  
Hamilton College  
Hamline University  
Hampshire College  
Harcum College  
Hardin-Simmons University  
Haverford College  
Heidelberg University  
Heritage University  
Hesston College  
Hiram College  
Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
Hollins University  
Holy Family University  
Hood College  
Hope International University  
Houghton College  
Husson University  
Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida  
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas  
Independent Colleges of Indiana  
Independent Colleges of Washington  
Indiana Institute of Technology  
Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
Iowa Wesleyan University  
Ithaca College  
Jacksonville College  
Jarvis Christian College  
Johnson & Wales University  
Juniata College  
Kalamazoo College  
Kansas City Art Institute  
Kansas Independent College Association  
Knox College

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La Sierra University  
LaGrange College  
Laguna College of Art and Design  
Lakeland University  
Lane College  
Lasell University  
Lenoir-Rhyne University  
Lewis & Clark College  
Lewis University  
Lindsey Wilson College  
Linfield University  
Lipscomb University  
Loras College  
Lourdes University  
Lubbock Christian University  
Luther College  
Malone University  
Manchester University  
Marietta College  
Marquette University  
Maryland Institute College of Art  
Maryville University  
McDaniel College  
Medaille College  
Meredith College  
MGH Institute of Health Professions  
Middlebury College  
Millikin University  
Mills College  
Minnesota Private College Council  
Montana Bible College  
Montserrat College of Art  
Morningside College  
Mount Holyoke College  
Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles  
Muhlenberg College  
Nebraska Methodist College  
Nebraska Wesleyan University  
Network of Colleges and Universities, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
New York Institute of Technology  
New York School of Interior Design  
New York University  
Newman University  
North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities

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Notre Dame de Namur University  
Notre Dame of Maryland University  
NYS Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities  
Oberlin College  
Ohio Dominican University  
Ohio Northern University  
Ohio Wesleyan University  
Olivet College  
Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities  
Otis College of Art and Design  
Our Lady of the Lake University  
Pace University  
Pacific Northwest College of Art  
Palo Alto University  
Peirce College  
Pepperdine University  
Point Loma Nazarene University  
Pratt Institute  
Rabbinical Seminary of America  
Randolph College  
Reed College  
Rhode Island School of Design  
Rider University  
Roanoke College  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rockford University  
Rollins College  
Saint Elizabeth University  
Saint Joseph's College of Maine  
Saint Louis University  
Saint Mary's College (IN)  
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College  
Salem Academy and College  
Sarah Lawrence College  
Seton Hall University  
Seton Hill University  
Shenandoah University  
Siena College  
Siena Heights University  
Simmons University  
Smith College  
Soka University of America  
South Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities  
Southern Methodist University

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Southwestern University  
Spartanburg Methodist College  
Springfield College  
St. Ambrose University  
St. Bonaventure University  
St. Catherine University, St. Paul, MN  
St. Edward's University  
St. Francis College - Brooklyn  
St. Lawrence University  
St. Olaf College  
Stonehill College  
Susquehanna University  
Swarthmore College  
Tabor College  
Teachers College, Columbia University  
Telshe Yeshiva Chicago  
Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association  
The Cleveland Institute of Art  
The College of St. Scholastica  
The George Washington University  
The University of San Diego  
Thomas More University  
Tiffin University  
Trine University  
Trinity University  
Trinity Washington University  
University of Dayton  
University of Findlay  
University of Hartford  
University of Lynchburg  
University of Mount Union  
University of Puget Sound  
University of Rio Grande  
University of Saint Mary  
University of San Francisco  
University of the Incarnate Word  
University of the Southwest  
Ursuline College  
VanderCook College of Music  
Vaughn College  
Villanova University  
Virginia Wesleyan University  
Walsh University  
Wartburg College





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Washington & Jefferson College

Washington Adventist University

Wayland Baptist University

Webster University

Wellesley College

Wesleyan University

West Virginia Independent Colleges & Universities

Western New England University

Wheaton College (IL)

Wheaton College (MA)

Whitman College

Whitworth University

Wilson College

Wingate University

Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Wittenberg University

Yes We Must Coalition