



Giving Grad Students a Voice...

For Immediate Release:
February 7, 2017

GSS Statement on President Trump's Executive Order:
Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorists Entry into the United States

Iowa City, Iowa - The recent executive orders enacted by President Donald Trump have caused justified outrage and alarm amongst the University of Iowa community. The suspension of entry of foreign nationals, including visa entries, from seven Muslim-majority countries has immediate and far-reaching effects on the daily lives of our student body. Not only do the acts and rhetoric of our current President directly contradict the values of respect for diversity, freedom of religion and thought, and commitment to protecting Human Rights, but they have also put misplaced hardships on our international students' friends, family, and loved ones. We therefore urge the leadership of the University of Iowa and Board of Regents to declare publicly that this institution fully and unwaveringly stands behind all its students and workers by further providing the legal, structural, and financial support needed to combat this administration's policy.

We, as the Graduate Student Senate, stand in solidarity with the international community by agreeing with the ACLU's condemnation of these acts as "unlawful" and fundamentally xenophobic. We agree with UI Faculty Senate's own statement, to "stand ready to help if you are in need of assistance" (University of Iowa Faculty Senate Officers, "Executive Order on Immigration" email, 2 February 2017). However, while this specific executive administration's suspension is allegedly temporary (and its current legality in question), it is only one part of a larger set of policies, proposed laws, and direct orders by the new administration that are characterized by xenophobia, authoritarianism, and a lack of basic human compassion. Be it in their attack on refugees, science, women's rights, or healthcare, these measures directly affect the constituents of GSS and many other members of the UI community. Muslim students, international and minority students, women, union laborers, people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, and members of the LGBTQI community are and will continue to be a target for the Trump administration and its supporters in the Iowa House and Senate.

The ability of universities across this nation to assure the free exchange of ideas, without fear of deportation or detainment, has been severely weakened. We, as the Graduate Student Senate, therefore urge the leadership of the University of Iowa and its various colleges to finally declare publicly that this institution fully and unwaveringly stands behind all of its students and workers. It is time to demonstrate the political will to stand up for the fundamental principles behind public higher education and an open, democratic society. We recognize that compliance with unjust laws itself perpetuates injustice and we therefore strongly encourage the university to denounce and refuse to comply with any unjust laws proposed by this administration.

Graduate Student Senate
University of Iowa
Tuesday, February 7, 2017

###