

TO: SUNY University Faculty Senate

FROM: Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Committee

RE: Resolution: To develop support services and best practices within SUNY both at system and on individual campuses for undocumented students

DATE: 178th Plenary, January 18-20, 2018

LOCATION: SUNY Polytechnic Institute at Utica

RESOLUTION #: 178-01-01

VOTE TALLY: 42 For; 4 Against; 1 Abstain

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS the mission of SUNY is “to provide to the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population in a complete range of academic, professional and vocational postsecondary programs including such additional activities in pursuit of these objectives as are necessary or customary”; and

WHEREAS SUNY’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, includes protections against discrimination on the basis of national origin; and

WHEREAS there are approximately 121,000 undocumented young people in the state of New York between the ages of 16-25 alone^[i]; and

WHEREAS there are known to be at least 1555 undocumented students within the SUNY system (less than 2% of the student population) and 6546 undocumented students within the CUNY system (2.8% of the student population)^[ii]; and

WHEREAS on January 12, 2012, SUNY’s Board of Trustees passed the Equitable Financial and Educational Access to Higher Education for New York’s Undocumented Immigrants Resolution to support undocumented students; and

WHEREAS the current political climate has caused heightened levels of anxiety for undocumented students, including those who fear increased enforcement and those who had received Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which is now being rescinded, and it is unclear whether Congress will take action to pass the DREAM Act or another solution; and

WHEREAS there are steps the SUNY system and campuses can take, and some have taken, to welcome and retain undocumented students, but preliminary policies (such as providing clear

instructions necessary to receive in-state tuition) seem to be unevenly implemented, and frontline staff and leadership alike lack clear directives from the State; and

WHEREAS many undocumented students would benefit from the financial support offered by on-campus scholarships, but miss this opportunity as scholarship applications often require the FAFSA or IRS tax documents, which many undocumented students cannot provide; and

WHEREAS the Chancellor, Chairman, and many University Presidents have shown support for undocumented students currently on our campuses ^[iii], especially those affected by the rescission of DACA^[iv].

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that the SUNY System designate an Undocumented/ DACA advisor who can lead efforts to assess existing practices at SUNY colleges and provide advice to campuses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that the SUNY-wide Diversity Advisory Council create a subcommittee to address matters relating to undocumented students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that each SUNY campus identify a contact person by March 16th, 2018, who can serve as a point person guiding campus-wide support services for undocumented students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all advising and additional assistance on campuses and at system level respect the special need for confidentiality for undocumented students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that ODEI convene a meeting in late Summer or Fall 2018 for campus contacts to discuss best practices and provide training for front-line administrators and faculty members and staff with the goal of at least half of staff completing the training before the end of 2018^[v]; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that the SUNY System support the development of a SUNY Dreamers Student Association by providing a means for campus groups to contact one another and share resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that senior leadership in SUNY and on campuses consider the special needs and fears of undocumented students when designing emergency plans that will require additional law enforcement agencies on campuses, and announce to the campus community that these agencies are on campus to assist campus law enforcement and will not lead to indiscriminate arrests or immigration enforcement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS Senators work with their campus governance bodies to ensure that campuses develop alternative means (other than IRS or FAFSA filings) for determining scholarship eligibility for undocumented students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UFS recommends to the Chancellor that SUNY System develop and send the SUNY FAQs for undocumented students to administrators at every campus to share with frontline staff (i.e. in admissions, student accounts, registration)^[vi].

BACKGROUND

- Adelante Student Voices is a Community Based Organization in upstate New York that provides counseling and a support network to undocumented students. Many graduates attend schools within SUNY. Adelante offers support to SUNY System and individual campuses to enact the resolution. adelantestudentvoices.org - adelantestudentvoices@gmail.com
- Some aspects of the resolution are adaptations of suggestions from the United We Dream toolkit for institutions of higher education: http://unitedwedream.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/UWDN_InstitutionalToolKit_final-1.pdf
- Many SUNY campuses are already providing support for undocumented students.
 - Examples of campus statement:
<http://www.albany.edu/news/81584.php?WT.source=ncfeed>
<http://www.buffalo.edu/president/from-the-president/communications/UB-supports-daca.html>
 - Examples of resource page:
<http://libguides.sunysuffolk.edu/daca-renewal>
<https://www.alfred.edu/students/involvement/resources.cfm>
 - Dutchess Community College has a Consortium that meets monthly to discuss access and retention for undocumented students, and will soon publish a webpage
- Cornell University supports an active student group, the Cornell Dream Team, and is hiring a full-time Assistant Director for Undocumented/DACA Student Support

[i] Migration Policy Institute, U.S. Census 2014 American Community Survey
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/NY>

[ii] New York State Comptroller, The New York State DREAM Act report
<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/osdc/rpt1-2014.pdf>

[iii] Chancellor lobbying in DC for DREAM Act alongside SUNY Presidents and Congressional leaders:
<https://blog.suny.edu/2017/10/stepping-up-to-protect-those-that-dream-of-a-better-life/>

[iv] Chancellor and Chairman joint statement on DACA rescission: <https://www.suny.edu/suny-news/press-releases/september-2017/9-5-17-daca/daca-statement.html>

[v] United We Dream UndocuPeers Liberating Campus Climate Curriculum to train faculty/staff

[vi] SUNY FAQs: <https://www.suny.edu/attend/get-started/undocumented/>