

January 30, 2017

Statement on U.S. Travel Restrictions

Western is adding its voice to those of universities across North America expressing grave concern regarding the recent executive order banning individuals from seven countries with Muslim majorities from entering the United States for 90 days.

Western is home to approximately 175 students and many faculty, staff and visitors from countries included in the ban, and we are deeply concerned about the potential hardship this could cause them and their families.

As highlighted in a statement made by Universities Canada, the travel ban also affects research partnerships, international studies, academic conference participation, and field visits. Indeed, the executive order is having an impact on Canadian campuses and communities that is real, immediate and profound.

We join Universities Canada, the Association of American Universities, and the Association of Public Land-grant Universities, along with our U.S. colleagues and partner institutions, in their calls to the American government to rescind this executive order as soon as possible. We worry about the chilling effect this ban will have on the transfer of knowledge. The problems of our world are highly complex and no one nation has all the answers. It is through the sharing and exchange of ideas and research findings that progress is and will be made.

We echo Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's commentary: "To those fleeing persecution, terror and war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength." The same spirit holds true here at Western, where we welcome students, faculty and staff from around the world, including those seeking refuge from violence and hardship. They strengthen our campus community, bringing new knowledge, ideas, perspectives, talent and skills for the benefit of all Canadians.

Western's Vice-Provost & Associate Vice-President International is striking a committee to monitor the situation and will provide updates on new developments that directly affect our campus community. A website will be developed for this purpose. Plans are also underway to host an event at which we can demonstrate our commitment to the values of diversity and inclusion, as well as express our support and appreciation of international students, faculty and staff.

In the meantime, students, faculty, staff and other members of the Western community with concerns about the implications of the executive order can contact Western International at iesc@uwo.ca

Sincerely,



Amit Chakma
President & Vice-Chancellor