



**NEW YORK SIX PRESIDENTS ISSUE STATEMENT OPPOSING  
CHANGES TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR VISA PROGRAMS**

(Syracuse, NY – October 2, 2020) The presidents of the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium member institutions have issued a statement opposing the changes to visa regulations for international students and visiting scholars which have been proposed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The proposed regulations would end the practice of issuing visas for the duration of a student’s academic studies or a scholar’s academic appointment and institute a fixed-term visa. The statement reads:

The member institutions of the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium strongly object to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s proposed changes to the regulations governing F and J visas, which will directly affect hundreds of students and dozens of scholars at our six schools alone. The proposed move to a fixed-term visa, in lieu of the current duration-of-status standard, places an undue burden on these individuals and risks impoverishing the intellectual life of our campuses and communities.

International students enrolling in academic programs at American colleges are committing themselves to a well-defined program of study, and agreements with visiting scholars likewise define the terms of their engagement. The current regulations provide appropriate safeguards to ensure duration-of-stay visa requirements are met. While the proposed rule cites the growth in the number of international students and scholars obtaining F and J visas over the past three or more decades, no data are provided to support the contention that violations and fraud are significant issues. Importantly, the Department indicates that insufficient staffing impedes its ability to manage the volume of visa requests and visa holders.

The solution to that problem is not to reduce the number of individuals seeking F and J visas or to limit their stays; rather, the Department should request additional federal funding to improve its infrastructure so that our communities continue to benefit from the presence of international students and scholars.

DHS acknowledges the academic, cultural, and economic benefit these individuals bring to our institutions and communities. We implore the Department of Homeland Security to rescind the proposed regulations and continue the duration-of-stay standard for F and J visas.

Signed,

Brian W. Casey, Colgate University  
David Wippman, Hamilton College  
Joyce P. Jacobsen, Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
William L. Fox, St. Lawrence University  
Marc C. Conner, Skidmore College  
David R. Harris, Union College

***About the New York Six:** The New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium facilitates collaboration and connection among its member institutions in fulfilling their educational missions and serving the public good. Through the sharing of expertise and resources, the Consortium enhances options for students, faculty, and staff, while reducing colleges' individual and collective operating and capital costs.*

Contact:

Amy Cronin, Executive Director  
New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium

[acronin@newyork6.org](mailto:acronin@newyork6.org)

607-351-5602