

New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium
Colgate University, Hamilton College, Hobart & William Smith Colleges
St. Lawrence University, Skidmore College, Union College

**NEW YORK SIX CONSORTIUM PRESIDENTS OBJECT TO
FEDERAL ACTIONS AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS**

Fayetteville, NY (July 8, 2020) – The presidents of the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium today issued a statement objecting to the Trump Administration’s recent actions limiting opportunities for international students and scholars on American college campuses. These actions include new restrictions in the Student and Exchange Visitor Program imposed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the suspension of the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program for skilled workers, through which colleges and universities hire faculty and postdoctoral scholars. The statement reads:

The Presidents of the member schools of the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium (Colgate University, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, St. Lawrence University, Skidmore College, and Union College) strongly object to recent actions by the federal government which restrict access and opportunities for international students and scholars, thereby limiting the educational experience for all students.

The changes to the federal Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which force institutions to offer in-person instruction or risk deportation of international students with F-1 and M-1 visas, are perplexing. Though our six institutions plan to offer a blend of face-to-face and remote courses in the fall, the unpredictable nature of the pandemic may force a return to fully remote instruction at a future point in order to protect the health and safety of our campuses and local communities. Such a decision would have grave consequences for our international students, whose education would be drastically disrupted through no fault of their own. We fail to see how this action is justifiable. The accommodations accorded to international students for the spring and summer should be continued at least through the fall term.

We also object to President Trump’s Executive Order to suspend the H-1B visa program, which is critically important to our ability to hire faculty and postdoctoral scholars with unique skill sets that ensure we are preparing the next generation of American workers with the highest quality education possible. The impact of this Order reaches well beyond higher education; it will have a severe impact on many U.S. businesses and industries.

The reason we seek international scholars and skilled workers is because there are not enough qualified Americans to meet demand across the broad scope of higher education and many business sectors in the U.S. We strongly encourage the Trump Administration to rescind this Order to ensure that our colleges and universities and businesses and industries are able to attract the best talent from across the world to yield the discoveries and innovations that will fuel U.S. economic recovery and growth.

The presence of international students and scholars on our campuses helps to prepare all of our students to be global citizens – to live in increasingly diverse and multicultural communities and to pursue careers in a global marketplace. Federal actions that restrict this important aspect of a college education threaten our nation’s status as a world leader.

The New York Six presidents signing on to this statement are: 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; and 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.

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