December 8th, 2016

Interim Provost Mauli Agrawal, President Ricardo Romo, Chancellor William McRaven

The Faculty Senate of the University of Texas at San Antonio, calls on you to affirm the university’s commitment to diversity by investigating and implementing concrete ways to provide for the safety and security of all students, faculty and staff. Many of our students belong to groups who are feeling particularly insecure in the current climate—immigrants, Mexicans/Latina/os, Muslims, African-Americans, LGBTQ, disabled, women, veterans, among others. The UTSA community is firmly committed to protecting our students and community members to our fullest capacity from anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, racist, misogynistic, and all other forms of harassment and hate.  We vow not to be silent or passive when members of our community face an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Given the very real possibility that the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, providing relief from deportation, will be abolished, and given that Texas has the second highest number of DACA applications in the nation, we request that you take all legal steps to:

* cooperate with immigration enforcement only up to but not beyond the extent required by law, and including at least the following: refuse permission for immigration enforcement on campus with respect to students, faculty or staff without a warrant or clear demonstration of exigent circumstances, per Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) policy; forbid UTSAPD officers from acting on behalf of federal agents in the enforcement of immigration law; refuse to release student, faculty or staff immigration status information to the federal government unless mandated by court order or other valid legal instrument.
* meet with Immigrant Youth Leadership Organization. As DACA students, they want a direct meeting to discuss the issue of continuing employment and delay of DACA renewals, and the very real threat to terminate DACA completely.
* assign a specific office and specific administrators who will counsel, on a strictly confidential basis, our DACA students and other students who lack the privilege of citizenship.
* guarantee continuing in-state tuition rates to DACA students who currently receive if, even if DACA itself is abolished or modified.
* assure that all students receive a campus, classroom, and community experience free of hostilities, aggressions, and bullying by training all staff and faculty in de-escalation intervention techniques, and promoting campus dialogues.

Given the urgency of the situation, we ask that UTSA take these steps as soon as possible so that DACA students can be assured of institutional support towards continuing and completing their degree programs.

According to an internal 2011 ICE memo, ICE officers may not normally undertake enforcement actions on college campuses (<https://www.ice.gov/doclib/ero-outreach/pdf/10029.2-policy.pdf>). This policy puts the university in a unique position to protect undocumented students on campus. It is the duty of this university to ensure that it remains a place that actively protects the rights and safety of ALL members of the UTSA community.

As the largest minority serving institution in the University of Texas system, UTSA has a unique obligation to implement its **Mission Statement’s** call to “embrace multicultural traditions.” UTSA’s core values of **Inclusiveness** and **Respect** assert that the university community must 1) “foster diversity and provide access to educational and socioeconomic opportunities for all—regardless of individual backgrounds and philosophies,” and 2) recognize “the dignity inherent in each individual.” The university community must enact these values by standing against any forms of harassment, intimidation, or threat.