



## **#RealCollege Statement on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Decision**

*This statement should be attributed to Eddy Conroy and Carrie R. Welton*

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On Monday, July 6, 2020, [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) announced](#) that nonimmigrant students (F-1 and M-1 visa holders) must leave the country if the schools they are attending will be online-only in fall 2020 or be subject to immigration consequences. The decision to bar nonimmigrant students from staying in the country is another blow to higher education institutions and students, which will only exacerbate an already tenuous situation.

The decision by ICE is another in a series of decisions under the Trump administration rooted in hate and anti-immigrant prejudices. This determination from ICE comes on the heels of the Department of Education's decision to [block students who are not Title IV eligible](#) from receiving emergency financial aid and [President Trump's continued attacks](#) on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Now, more than one million international students are at risk of losing their access to American higher education.

Students are already reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and this decision will only cause more harm. Our most recent report, [#RealCollege During the Pandemic](#), showed that nearly 3 in 5 students experienced some form of food or housing insecurity as a result of the pandemic. The decision to force international students to leave the country will only place their education and health at further risk.

Higher education institutions, both public and private, are already facing [bleak financial conditions](#). The pandemic has contributed to a decline in fall enrollment, loss of revenue from sports, housing, and other campus expenses, and a strong likelihood of future federal and state budget cuts. None of this bodes well for institutions that rely on a portion of the estimated [\\$41 billion dollars](#) international students contribute to their institutions and the U.S. economy every year.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration would rather enact a racist nationalist agenda instead of doing the right thing for students and our institutions of higher education. We support efforts to [challenge ICE's decision in court](#) and stand in solidarity with international #RealCollege students.

Notes: A Spanish translation of this statement is forthcoming.