Dear International Students,

In addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which impacts public health around the globe and has made international travel increasingly difficult, recent announcements of changes to visa rules and other restrictions serve to further complicate the lives of Yale’s international students. We join President Salovey and other Yale faculty and leaders in expressing our utmost concern at the effort to place roadblocks in the way of students trying to begin or continue their studies at Yale.

Although the most recent guidance from the Department of Homeland Security came as a surprise, we are aiming to ensure that Yale’s hybrid plan for the fall meets the new requirements. We are working out some of the details of how this will be achieved and will provide further information on a school-by-school basis. This may involve some restriction of the range of courses international students can take in order to ensure that each international student can take an in-person class, as required by the guidance.

President Salovey yesterday issued a statement [1] on the most recent guidance. As he wrote there, “the potential disruption in the education of our international students will undercut the strength of American higher education, which draws brilliant individuals from around the world to our country. Our nation’s history of openness has long been essential to U.S. leadership and a thriving economy.” President Salovey has informed us that Yale will be joining other universities in filing an amicus brief in support of a lawsuit by Harvard and MIT requesting a temporary restraining order to block the implementation of the new guidance. Yale is also working with the American Council on Education [2], the Association of American Universities [3], and other groups to challenge the new rules.
As plans for the coming fall semester at Yale are being finalized, we write to express Yale’s commitment to you. Throughout the summer, we will be available to assist you in all ways possible as together we adjust to – and meet the challenges of – this complicated time. Your ability to arrive on our campus in time for the fall term, or to remain in New Haven and maintain your student status, is a top priority for us. So, of course, are your well-being and continued good health as well as any alternate arrangements that may prove necessary should you be unable to travel. In particular, we are working to make sure that Yale’s hybrid program meets any requirements necessary to allow you to apply for a visa to study here or to remain here if you are already enrolled. We hope to have more details available within the next week to facilitate your initial arrival or return to campus. If—for travel, visa, or health reasons—you are unable to come to New Haven in the fall, we will look for alternative arrangements to allow you to begin or continue your Yale education.

The Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) maintains a website which features important news and announcements to help you better understand relevant information as soon as it becomes available. Please visit the news page [4] and, to stay informed, sign up to receive OISS email newsletters [5]. The website also features information about making an appointment to meet with an OISS Adviser [6], which can be done by email or Zoom meeting, for guidance.

International students, and international faculty and scholars, are of critical importance to the United States and to Yale, and our steadfast commitment [7] to you is unwavering. As one of the world’s great universities, Yale has a duty to educate global citizens and leaders, and that includes maintaining a strong and vibrant international community and supporting our international students and scholars. Please be assured that we are working to ensure that you continue to receive an excellent Yale education.

Yours sincerely,

Pericles Lewis
Vice President for Global Strategy
Douglas Tracy Smith Professor of Comparative Literature

Ann Kuhlman
Executive Director
Office of International Students and Scholars

We encourage you to seek support from the resources available to you.

- [Yale Mental Health and Counseling] [8] - same day appointments
- [Yale Chaplain's Office] [9] - schedule a time to meet with a Chaplain
- [Additional Wellness Resources] [10]

Source URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/news/message-to-students-on-dhs-guidance

Links:
[1] https://president.yale.edu/speeches-writings/statements/dhs-policy-regarding-international-students-and-online-education
