



A Message from University of Kentucky
PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO

Dear Campus Community,

Earlier this week, federal officials with the Student and Exchange Visitor Program issued a new regulation that would restrict international students from attending universities that only offer classes online.

We recognize that this announcement has created an air of uncertainty for our international students. I want to emphasize that the University of Kentucky looks forward to welcoming back to campus all of our students — from all backgrounds and cultures — for a residential experience that will provide ample opportunities for face-to-face instruction.

From our initial review of this new policy, we believe we will be able to continue educating and serving our international student community without interruption.

Our plan continues to be to return in August to a robust, residential campus experience. Already, from our initial review of schedules, plans for a majority of classes are focused on in-person instruction. Of course, many students will learn in a mix of ways — in-person classes, online or hybrid approaches.

The regulation, from our initial review, would not appear to interrupt what we do or how we do it. Technology gives us flexibility to meet students and faculty where they are and to shift depending upon their needs at a given moment. We designed this playbook to be flexible and adaptable, given the very fluid environment we find ourselves in today. We will incorporate this policy development, and others as they occur, to ensure that we are safeguarding the health, safety, well-being and education of everyone in our community throughout the academic year.

That said, the regulation as announced this week, understandably, has prompted deep concerns and no small amount of confusion and anxiety in our community.

I want to be clear: a diverse community is a stronger one. It is a better one.

The presence of international students, faculty and staff is a critical part of who we are, what we value and what we aspire to be as a research university and as an inclusive place, a community that is richer for bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

I will be joining with a number of my fellow presidents in expressing our concerns to the appropriate federal officials about this policy. I fear it will further create the perception that we are not welcoming and that we do not value the contributions of international students to our community.

At the University of Kentucky, nothing — nothing — could be further from the truth. Already, our International Center is reaching out to assure international students of our continued support and commitment to them. Universities are, at their core, about two things: People and ideas. We are better when we don't erect barriers to either one. Thank you for being a place that values the contributions that those from all walks of life, perspectives and backgrounds bring to the mosaic of ideas and people that make us the University of Kentucky.

Eli Capilouto