California Faculty Association rejects Trump Administration policies on immigration, vows to protect and defend faculty, students and staff

Jan. 31, 2017 — The California Faculty Association is outraged by the Executive Orders being issued by the Trump Administration, most recently the edict banning Muslim immigrants from targeted countries in the Middle East, which could directly impact the lives of many students and faculty, as well as impact learning and working conditions within the California State University system.

We will not stand by and watch as our colleagues, students, staff, and community members are detained and their status questioned. We support leaders like California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, who criticized the immigration ban as a policy that is “unconstitutional, un-American and unlawful.”

Many of the communities in which our CSU campuses thrive are home to large numbers of refugees. Within California, San Diego, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and Stanislaus counties welcomed the largest numbers of refugees in 2016, including those who resettled under Special Immigrant Visa Program. This program is for Iraqis and Afghans who helped the U.S. during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. They are members of our community, and their children are our students in the K-12 and public university systems. They are as valuable as any of us, and their rights deserve to be upheld.

CFA, which represents the more than 27,000 faculty within the California State University, has a history of defending faculty, upholding academic freedom, and advocating for policy changes that improve public higher education, as well as the state of California.

We are deeply committed to anti-racism and social justice transformation, and will continue to defend our colleagues and students from all manner of hate, including racist, sexist, nationalist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-Muslim, and anti-Semitic attacks.

We are proud that our position on protections for undocumented and vulnerable students and colleagues has been adopted within the California legislature and serves as the framework for Assembly Bill 21, legislation proposed by Assembly Member Ash Kalra.

We will continue to conduct research and speak out when we uncover facts that, despite being uncomfortable, impact our students and faculty within the CSU system. Earlier this month, CFA released a report, “Equity, Interrupted: How California is Cheating Its Future,” which found that over a 30-year span, funding for the CSU has decreased as its student population grew increasingly more diverse. As the findings show, as the CSU grew darker, funding grew lighter. The truth is always worth pursuing, and we will not abandon that post.
CFA’s commitment to ideals and actions include:

Protection of faculty and advocacy for students
We will work to defend faculty and students who may be facing scrutiny due to their work status, and ensure that the CSU does not become a hostile work environment.

Any faculty member who is from the seven countries targeted by the immigration ban is advised to read information compiled by CFA [here](#). Through CFA membership, members have the benefit of one (1) 30-minute consultation with attorneys who can advise and make referrals for specific legal issues. Contact CFA’s Membership Department for access to this member benefit.

Upholding Academic Freedom
We will oppose any censorship of courses related to the Middle East and the religion of Islam, and we will support and defend faculty teaching such courses and the students who take them.

Support for sister public higher ed systems
Work being done by the [UC Davis Immigration Law Clinic](#) within our sister university system is integral to the protection of immigrants, and we encourage everyone to support its efforts to protect immigrants to our state, and the students who provide free legal services. These law students are among those offering legal aid to detainees at airports and protesting the immigration ban, and we encourage others to participate alongside them in solidarity.

Last spring, CFA’s Council for Affirmative Action led the conversation about protections for undocumented students, which was a focal point at our [Equity Conference](#), where Kevin Johnson, Dean of the UC Davis School of Law, served as keynote speaker.

Transparency of Information
CFA supports the [American Civil Liberties Union’s rebuke](#) of the Trump Administration’s unconstitutional and un-American policies and demand for access to key documents regarding Pres. Trump’s conflicts of interest.

Resources to help
We ask that everyone help spread the word that the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic-Relations (CAIR), a Muslim civil rights group, is asking Muslim community members who believe their rights have been violated to contact local police and CAIR’s Civil Rights Department at (202) 742-6420.

The ACLU also has resources available in Northern and Southern California.

Our affiliates also may be of help. The California Teachers Association has posted a Social Justice Toolkit, which [available online](#) in several languages. SEIU also has launched a petition and has immigrant resources online, and NEA maintains EdJustice, a site that includes social justice updates, information, and actions.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) also has launched a petition calling on faculty, students and citizens to remain engaged, and for lawmakers to oppose the Trump administration’s discriminatory order.
As a progressive labor union representing a broad spectrum of faculty and students from every corner of our nation and other countries, CFA will not cease to fight on behalf of civil rights and academic freedom. Now, and into the future, we remain committed to the pursuit of truth and knowledge, and we will do everything to uphold those while protecting the faculty we represent.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA FACULTY ASSOCIATION: CFA represents more than 27,000 tenured and tenure-track instructional faculty, lecturers, librarians, counselors, and coaches on the 23 campuses of the California State University system. Learn more about CFA at www.calfac.org.