

March 2, 2017

Joint Policy Statement Regarding Immigration Enforcement

In recent weeks, the new administration in Washington, through both its rhetoric and actions, has prompted grave concerns regarding the safety and well being of undocumented students, Muslim students, and members of their families across the nation. In response, schools have issued (or reiterated) statements of concern and support for those students, and all the members of their respective communities. Many have also publicly posted their policies for responding to any immigration enforcement action on campus. We have read many of these policy statements, and commend all who seek to bring clarity, love, and support to those members of our communities most exposed and most at risk. Policies put forward by colleges and universities across the country, including those promulgated by Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, Denver University, and others have served as models for our policy. We are encouraged by the near universal support of the seminary and wider-academic communities for our undocumented and Muslim students. However, our unity and common cause will, no doubt, be challenged in the weeks and months ahead. So we must continue to work together to ensure the safety and security of our students, our colleagues, and our friends.

To ensure that our policy is clear and known to all in our community, McCormick Theological Seminary ("McCormick") and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago ("LSTC") set forth our joint position and response regarding DACA and the DREAM Act, and our shared policy regarding any effort by Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), or any other law enforcement agency, to enter upon our property for investigative, enforcement, or other actions directed at any of our students.

DACA and the DREAM Act

- McCormick and LSTC support the goals and values embodied in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") and the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act ("DREAM Act"). DACA is a policy established under President Obama in 2012 that provides qualifying persons under the age of 31 who were brought to the United States illegally when they were under the age of 16 temporary relief from deportation and a renewable two-year work permit. The DREAM Act was first introduced in Congress in 2001. Despite bi-partisan support, the DREAM Act has failed to pass and has not become law. The DREAM Act would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented children who grew up in the United States. Many states, including Illinois, have adopted their own versions of the DREAM Act.

McCormick and LSTC Policies and Guidelines Regarding Immigration Enforcement

- McCormick and LSTC shall not voluntarily grant access to immigration officials for enforcement, investigative or similar purposes on any property we own or control, including our respective housing properties.
- Any request by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”), U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (“CBP”) or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”) for information or access shall be forwarded immediately to the office of either school’s President and/or the Chief Business Officer (McCormick) or Vice President for Operations (LSTC) for evaluation and appropriate response and support for our student or students.
- McCormick/LSTC campus security personnel, both our own respective employees, and our contract security company, Allied Universal, are instructed not to assist ICE, CBP, USCIS or any other law enforcement agency in any effort to identify and deport undocumented community members. Instead, they have been instructed to contact the office of either school’s President and/or either the Chief Business Officer (McCormick) or Vice President for Operations (LSTC) who will work with our counsel to determine our legal rights and responsibilities, the legal options available to our student or students, and take appropriate action.
- Our security personnel shall not make inquiries regarding the immigration status or religious affiliation of any of our students or invited guests.
- McCormick and LSTC shall not voluntarily share any student information with immigration enforcement officials. We support and comply fully with all privacy laws, including, without limitation, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).
- McCormick and LSTC shall continue to admit and house students in accordance with their respective and long-standing nondiscrimination policies.
- McCormick and LSTC shall not cooperate voluntarily with any federal effort to create a registry of individuals based on protected characteristics such as religion, national origin, race or sexual orientation. We strongly believe that any such effort would be unconstitutional, violate various existing state and federal laws, and violate values that McCormick and LSTC have long held dear.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this policy, please feel free to contact:

For McCormick:

President Frank Yamada, Executive Vice President David Crawford, or Registrar Chandra Wade.

For LSTC:

President James Nieman, Vice President for Operations Bob Berridge, or Dean of Student Services, Scott Chalmers.

