

Dear Colleagues,

Boise State University attracts and embraces the best students, scholars, researchers and employees from all over the world. We stand as a beacon of greater cultural understanding through education.

The Executive Order issued on Friday, January 27, 2017, does not change our commitment to innovation, excellence and fostering the diversity of ideas on our campus. We will always be a place of respect for others. We also uphold the rule of law and recognize the importance of a legitimate immigration system and an efficient visa system designed to protect our national security. As such, we are committed to doing all that we can within the bounds of the law to ardently support Boise State students, faculty and staff.

This email is intended to address and clarify issues and questions that may be of concern to international students, scholars, faculty or staff members. Please note that this situation is fluid and changing rapidly and the following information represents our understanding of the circumstances as it stands today.

Some parts of the Executive Order apply broadly to all visa holders, regardless of their country of citizenship. Most notably, new restrictions and changes to the visa issuance process and entry procedures to the United States will likely affect all citizens of other countries. For instance, it appears that all visa applicants, regardless of country of origin, will require an in-person interview. So everyone should expect that visa wait times will likely increase. The new visa issuance process may include new questions, further background checks or other new processes. These may also increase wait times.

Many of the provisions of the Executive Order relate directly to admission into the United States as a refugee. For at least the next 90 days, citizens of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen will not be issued visas and, as such, will not be able to enter the United States legally. The Order does not, as of now, direct any action to citizens of these countries currently residing in the United States with a valid status.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been directed by the Executive Order to create new processes for visas for citizens of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The details of the new process are not yet defined. Also, such processes are subject to change. The Executive Order also directs the DHS to review and add additional countries to the current list of countries, which will then be subject to the new screening and vetting process that DHS will build. The countries on that new list will then have 60 days to provide information needed for the screening procedures. If those countries do not supply the required information, the citizens of those countries will not be issued visas and will not be able to enter the United States. We will not know which countries will be on that list until the report is issued. Such new restrictions could be imposed at any time.

Finally, the Executive Order directs the Department of Homeland Security to complete and implement a biometric entry-exit system for all travelers to the United States. Details on this new screening system have not been provided.

Based on this, we recommend that students, scholars, faculty, and staff who are citizens of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen (including those with dual citizenship) should understand that if they leave the United States, even in an emergency, they will not be able to return for at least the next 90 days, and possibly much longer.

For citizens of other countries, if you travel outside the U.S., you should expect increased visa delays and be aware of the risk that entry rules may change while you are traveling.

Our actions remain consistent with our long-standing policies on non-discrimination, privacy and public safety. At Boise State we welcome and support international students, scholars, faculty and staff. We will continue to admit students in a manner consistent with the law and our non-discrimination policy. The university will continue to comply with federal laws and regulations governing our international programs. As required by the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act, the privacy of student records is maintained consistent with state and federal laws. We do not share student records related to immigration status except when required by law. The university offers confidential counseling services to all students.

The university remains committed to the safety and success of our international students, scholars and employees. We will support you by ensuring that you have information and resources to prepare for changes in the visa application process and other immigration policies and procedures. We encourage those affected to speak with an adviser before making any foreign travel plans. We will continue to provide advice to students and employees on immigration and foreign travel related concerns. Students should contact the Center for Global Education at [208-426-3652](tel:208-426-3652) and employees should contact Kendra Smith in the Office of General Counsel at [208-426-4407](tel:208-426-4407).

Bob Kustra
President