



Kum-Kum Bhavnani
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*Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
Faculty Representative to the Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200*

May 1, 2020

**JANET NAPOLITANO, PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

Re: Letter Opposing New Immigration Restrictions

Dear Janet,

At its April 29 meeting, the Academic Council unanimously endorsed the attached letter from the chairs and vice chairs of CCGA, UCORP, and UCFW. The letter expresses deep concern about new restrictions on immigration to the United States implemented by the current Presidential administration during the COVID-19 crisis, and requests that you work with California's elected Representatives and Senators to oppose these and further restrictions.

Council strongly opposes these further attacks on the naturalization process in the USA. As you know, immigrants from around the world contribute hugely to life in California: in areas that include agriculture, caregiving, manufacturing knowledge, and cultural work. Indeed, the success of Silicon Valley is often attributed to the innovative ideas offered by immigrants, who have also contributed significantly to breakthroughs in COVID-19 research. More locally, immigrants enrich the University of California's academic, creative, and cultural life. These new restrictions affect the entire UC community: there are students, post docs, faculty, and staff at every stage of the naturalization process within our community, and we stand with them in our opposition to these draconian measures.

We ask for your help in bringing the issue to the attention of policy makers, and in taking a stand on behalf of the University in opposing further punitive actions to restrict immigration that also punish US economies and cultures. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Chair
Academic Council

cc: Chief of Staff Kao
Academic Council
CCGA Chair Balasubramaniam
CCGA Vice Chair El Abbadi
UCFW Chair Saphores
UCFW Vice Chair Halpain
UCORP Chair Baird
UCORP Vice Chair Desjardins
Provost and Executive Vice President Brown
Senate Directors



April 30, 2020

Dear Kum-Kum,

We are writing to ask you to convey to President Napolitano our deep concerns with regards to increasing restrictions on immigration to the United States, and to ask her to work with California's elected Representatives and Senators to oppose further immigration restrictions.

Regrettably, the need for this letter was precipitated by the U.S. Administration's recent [executive order](#) placing restrictions on immigration. While the impact of this executive order on members of the UC community is hard to determine, we are worried that future executive orders could be more punitive. Indeed, recent events suggest that this remains a serious possibility as evidenced by the linked [article](#) in the Washington Post dated 4/24. We are concerned that UC faculty, post-docs, and students who may count on a path to naturalization will be turned away, thereby affecting the ability to attract world-class talent to the UC system.

As you know, immigrants are the life blood of this great country. In fact, several of us signing here came to the US to train with the best of the best, to teach and train the best of the next generation, and to conduct leading edge research to further the economic strength of our adopted country. Like us, immigrants from all walks of life have been making vital contributions to all sectors of the US economy since its foundation, from agriculture, tourism, industry, and construction, to all areas of research, and especially to higher education. Looking back, it is quite likely that the allies might have lost World War II if not for scientific advances made possible by our immigrant inventors and scholars. Today, our world-class post-secondary educational system owes a large part of its preeminence to its students of foreign origin who came to study in the US, stayed to give back to research and became mentors teaching American-born students. These immigrants contribute immensely to the diversity and the social vibrancy of California, especially at UC.

In closing, and on behalf of our respective standing committees of the Senate Academic Council, we ask that you convey to President Napolitano the importance and the urgency of allowing immigrants to continue contributing to higher education, and more generally recognize their potential contributions to a rapid recovery of the US economy.

Sincerely,

Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Chair, Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs
Amr El-Abbadi, Vice-Chair, Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs

Andrew Baird, Chair, University Committee on Research Policy
Richard Desjardins, Vice-Chair, University Committee on Research Policy

Jean-Daniel Saphores, Chair, University Committee on Faculty Welfare
Shelley Halpain, Vice-Chair, University Committee on Faculty Welfare