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**ASBMB statement on modifications to Student and Exchange Visitor Program
Trump administration continues assault on immigrants — ignoring effects on higher ed and science**

The following is a statement from Benjamin Corb, public affairs director for the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology:

“Once again, this administration has made a wrongheaded immigration decision that will, by happenstance or design, irrevocably damage American science. Furthermore, it will upend the lives of hundreds of thousands of hardworking and talented students from abroad.

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement decision to [deny F-1 visas this fall to international students](#) who are enrolled at U.S. universities forced — by the still-unchecked COVID-19 crisis — to hold only online courses continues the troubling trend of the Trump administration creating obstacles for foreign-born students and scientists. In the very first month of his presidency, Donald Trump issued an [executive order](#) that prevented scientists from countries with large Muslim populations from traveling to the U.S. to present their research at scientific conferences. For years now, the administration has sought to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, imperiling so-called Dreamers seeking science degrees and careers in the health sciences. In April, the [administration suspended H-1B visas](#), which affected science graduate students, postdoctoral researchers and interns. Meanwhile, a [U.S. Senate bill](#) introduced in May by Republican Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee seeks to ban Chinese students from studying science in the U.S. The message from Trump and his supporters to foreign-born students is clear: You’re not welcome here, regardless of your contributions to the discovery and development of cures, therapies and technologies that will improve lives all over the world.

These policy decisions are eroding America’s role as the world’s leader in science and innovation and causing long-term, irreparable harm to the nation’s economy. American science thrives on international collaboration, diversity and inclusion. The U.S. has long been a beacon for the very best talent, but every time the Trump administration devises a new way to restrict lawful entry to the U.S. that valuable talent gets scooped up by competing nations. There is no way to calculate America’s profound losses.

The ASBMB, which proudly represents thousands of students and researchers from America and abroad, stands in opposition to the Trump administration’s efforts to close America’s borders to students seeking both an education and a better life, high-skilled specialists and biomedical scientists.”