

Dear Students,

The Department of Homeland Security announced today that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program will expire on March 5, 2018, unless Congress takes action to continue this program.

I am deeply saddened by this news, and can only begin to imagine the fear and anxiety that our DACA students at College of the Canyons are experiencing as they wonder what comes next for themselves and their families.

Despite this uncertainty, today's decision does not alter our commitment at College of the Canyons to create educational opportunities for the students we serve. We value inclusiveness and diversity, and our focus remains on helping students achieve their educational goals. We look forward to offering the same support and dedication to our students that they have come to know and trust during their time with us.

College of the Canyons students who applied for and were accepted into the DACA program will maintain their current benefits as outlined in the memo issued today by the Department of Homeland Security. DACA not only protects undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children from deportation, but it also allows them to apply for and receive two-year permits that enable them to legally work in the U.S.

Because DACA gives eligible applicants a work permit and blocks their deportation, it allows California Community College students to establish California residency for enrollment purposes.

Many of our DACA students are therefore classified as California residents. Even with the policy change announced today, DACA students will still retain their California residency status for enrollment purposes.

College of the Canyons will not ask DACA students to re-confirm their residency status. The only exception would be if they leave for a semester and come back. Like all students in that situation, if they are applying to enroll in credit courses, they would have to re-apply for admission to the college and confirm their residency status.

It is also important to note that today's announcement does not affect AB 540. AB 540 is a state program that is entirely separate and distinct from DACA and the federal enforcement of immigration laws. Under AB 540, students may still apply to attend College of the Canyons, qualify for an exemption of non-resident tuition fees, and apply for financial aid under the terms of the California Dream Act.

I also want to reaffirm the commitments that we made to students in November following the election:

- College of the Canyons will not release any personally identifiable student information, including any data related to immigration status, without a judicial warrant, subpoena or court order, unless authorized by the student or required by law.
- The college will not voluntarily cooperate with any federal effort to create a registry of individuals based on any protected characteristics such as religion, national origin, race, or sexual orientation.
- And, as Congress considers the legislative future of DACA, College of the Canyons will continue to advocate for educational opportunities for all students in the community college system, regardless of immigration status, at the state and federal level.

In closing, please remember that College of the Canyons cares about **you** and we are here to help. Please contact the Admissions & Records Office at (661) 362-3280 with any questions, and we will do our best to help support you in the days ahead.

Sincerely,
Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook
Chancellor