November 11, 2016

To the UMass International Student & Scholar Community:

Upon the conclusion of the U.S. Presidential election this week, we are all reflecting on what was a very intense and in many ways divisive event. Beyond some of the more confusing aspects of the U.S. electoral system itself, many things said in campaign speeches and debates have caused concern among many different religious, ethnic and international communities. As a result, I wanted to take this opportunity to reiterate a few very important points to our UMass international community:

1) Most importantly, each and every one of you are sincerely valued and welcome members of the UMass community. Your presence on our campus, and in our community at-large, benefits us in countless, meaningful ways. This will never change.
2) While any Presidential administration can recommend changes and amendments to existing policies and regulations, there are no proposed or immediate changes to the U.S. visa classifications that are sponsored by UMass, including F-1, J-1, H-1B and adjustment to permanent residency (“green card”). Any proposed changes to existing visa categories must be made through regulatory and legislative procedures under existing law, and these changes take time.
3) There are absolutely no new restrictions on the ability for visa-sponsored individuals to travel outside of the U.S. and to re-enter the country in your existing visa classification and valid immigration status.
4) The U.S. visa application and consular process remains the same. There are no new procedures or restrictions on visa issuance for any reason.

I would like to reiterate that you are always welcome to contact the IPO for any specific questions regarding your immigration status. Please rely on us to provide you with accurate and timely advice and information and do not rely entirely on what you may hear from other sources including friends, relatives and particularly postings on the internet.

Additionally, UMass has a number of outstanding resources on campus that are always available to you:
Office of Religious and Spiritual Life: (413) 545-9642, 416 Student Union
Center for Counseling and Psychological Health: (413) 545-2337, 127 Hills North 8:30 am – 5:00 pm; (413) 577-5000 for After-Hours Medical & Mental Health Advice
Dean of Students Office: (413) 545-2684, 227 Whitmore Administration Building
Student Legal Services Office: (413) 545-1995, 902 Campus Center
Faculty and Staff Assistance Program: (413) 545-0350, Ground Floor, 202-205 Middlesex House

Finally, on behalf of the very dedicated IPO staff, we stand committed to the promotion and advocacy of keeping the doors of the United States wide open for the free-flow of academic collaboration and education.

Respectfully yours,

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