

From: **Ling-chi Wang** <lcwang@berkeley.edu>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 8:43 PM

Subject: Expulsion of Students Supported Chinese Scholarship Council

To: <Provost@unt.edu>

Dear Provost and Vice President Jennifer Evans-Cowley:

I write to express my shock and profound concern over what I have just learned that, on behalf the University of North Texas (UNT), Denton, you had suddenly and arbitrarily decided August 26 to terminate the University's relationship with Chinese visiting scholars who had received financial support from the Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) of China. (See a copy of your letter is below). It is my understanding that the administration did not consult with the faculty sponsors of these scholars nor did it offer any explanation to the scholars being summarily expelled without cause. In so doing, the decision effectively invalidated the visas of these visiting scholars, compelling them to leave the U.S. within one month at a time when most trans-Pacific flights, due to the ongoing pandemic, had been canceled and very few flights and tickets are available at prohibitively high prices. To back up your decision, the University further notified the U.S. immigration authority of the termination of their legal status. In short, the decision amounts to an arbitrary expulsion not just from the university but also from the U.S. In the absence of any legitimate explanation, the expulsion appears to be national origin-based and possibly racially and politically motivated, an action explicitly prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964.

I, therefore, find the decision sudden, disturbing, and arbitrary, totally inconsistent with the governance of most research universities in our country and possibly in violation of the right of due process to which these scholars are entitled. Furthermore, their visit was duly sponsored by UNT faculty and their visas were reviewed, processed, and approved by both UNT and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

I happen to be a professor at UC Berkeley specializing, among other subjects, in the history of Chinese immigration to the U.S. The way Chinese immigrants were singled out for racial exclusion and mistreated by the U.S. Congress (which enacted more than a dozen Chinese exclusions laws between 1882 and 1965), the immigration authority, and the federal courts is a chapter in our national history we cannot be proud of. What the University has just decided appears to signal a return to the Chinese exclusion era in the midst of the worst pandemic in our history and a resurgence of ugly nationalism and racism.

If the Chinese Scholarship Council is a problem, the university community and the public are entitled to have a full disclosure of what the problems are. The CSC, to the best of my knowledge, is just one of the many funds and foundations, some of which are government-funded and others supported by corporations and private donations, designed to provide financial support for worthy students to study abroad, just like many funds and foundations in the U.S, supported by both public and private donations, such

as, National Defense and Education Fund, National Institute of Health, National Endowment for Democracy, Fulbright Fellowship, American Council of Education, etc. The decision to expel all visiting scholars supported by CSC is unprecedented. UNT appears to be the only American institution of high education to be carrying out such a policy.

I urge you to reconsider and rescind the decision immediately so that the innocent visiting scholars from China can resume their scholarly exchange and research activities for which they came to UNT.

I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

L. Ling-chi Wang
Professor Emeritus
Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies