
COMMENTARY Border Security

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

No foreign student who is obeying the conditions of his visa and

- 1 **staying focused on his studies has anything to worry about.**
- 2 **The billions of dollars foreign students bring here have nothing to do with the purpose of higher education or of student visas.**
- 3 **We should be choosier, and those we choose should be grateful for the opportunity.**

The State Department had revoked about 1,500 visas throughout the United States as of late April, Inside Higher Ed [estimates](#). Immigration and Customs Enforcement has investigated some of them, and some will be asked to leave or be deported if they have broken the conditions of their student status per U.S. immigration law. A small number may be deported if the Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, deems their presence detrimental to U.S. foreign policy.

Two professors at Cornell and Yale [claimed](#) in the Washington Post that “our foreign students are terrified, and they’re right to be.” Please. No foreign student who is obeying the conditions of his visa and staying focused on his studies has anything to worry about.

Here’s who should be terrified: any Jewish student who heard Cornell history professor Russell Rickford say he was “[exhilarated](#)” at the news that Hamas terrorists had attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing over 1,000 and kidnapping 245. A year later, he was back on campus.

Who else should worry? Yale professors such as Erika and Nicholas Christakis, who treat students as adults, only to then deal with tantrums and Ivy League cancel culture. A decade ago, the Christakis’s were [hounded by students](#) for telling them that a Halloween costume probably wasn’t an intentional hate crime. Don’t think

tried to build an encampment and reportedly blocked Jewish students from going to class.

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The New York Times also [claims](#) that “losing international students could devastate many colleges.” They cite Xiaofeng Wan, a “private consultant to international students” whose gravy train is drying up and worries that Chinese parents may not want to send their children to a country that sees “China as a hostile competitor.”

But China is indeed a hostile competitor. They’ve been spying on us, sending international students to sneak out university research secrets, and stealing our intellectual property for decades. Maybe a slight reduction in Chinese students isn’t such a disaster.

Among the [1.1 million foreign students](#) here, 1,500 revocations is a negligible percentage. So, why the freak-out? The Times admits the real reason: “American colleges and universities have attracted growing numbers of international students who often pay full tuition, effectively subsidizing domestic students.”

The first part is true. Most foreign students are cash cows. But the real subsidies are from American taxpayers in the form of subsidies and student loans, all while colleges have increased tuition way beyond inflation for decades.

The billions of dollars foreign students bring here have nothing to do with the purpose of higher education or of student visas. Foreign students leaven the bread of a U.S. college, and like yeast, you can have too much.

At Columbia University, home of the most notorious and violent pro-Hamas and anti-Israel protests, [more than half](#) the students are foreign. At New York University, there were around 10,000 international students on F1 and J1 visas in 2013. But there are now over [27,000](#)—almost half the [student body](#).

Colleges claim that student visas are all about attracting top talent, but the real reason is not quality, it’s quantity—and dollars. With shrinking U.S. fertility, the

So far, that has meant closure or merger for many smaller, poorer, and less well-known colleges. As the freshman numbers decline, the closures will climb the food chain, and there will be lobbying for foreign students, with ever-diminishing standards, to fill the gap. College administrators won't put national security or societal cohesion above their bottom line.

>>> Let's Put Suspension or Expulsion Back on the Table for Violent College Students

Another card college administrators will play is to say that foreign students are here to get jobs after graduation. Yes, retaining a small percentage of the best foreign students is in America's interest. But the main intent of a student visa is that a foreign national gets a good U.S. education and then goes home to build up their own country.

Sure, we can keep the cream, but using average and below-average students as a bulk cheap labor program, particularly in fields that are already highly competitive here, lowers American wages and cuts off opportunities for our own students.

While they are here, foreign students need to focus on their studies, not politics. In March, students, including foreign students at Tufts University, wrote an opinion article in the college paper demanding that the university president accept student resolutions to "acknowledge the Palestinian genocide," "divest from companies with ... ties to Israel, and "hold Israel accountable for clear violations of international law," which they alleged included "credible accusations against Israel include accounts of deliberate starvation and indiscriminate slaughter of Palestinian civilians and plausible genocide."

These students should spend more time studying supposed "international law," which amounts only to treaties that countries willingly join and can also leave, rather than making political demands on their school.

A student visa to the U.S. should always be hard to get, and we should choose carefully and with limits. Canada and Great Britain lowered their standards in recent years and attracted a recent wave of low-quality students more intent on work and migration than hitting the books. We should be choosier, and those we