September 6, 2017

Dear Western Faculty,

Today we write to express our unwavering support for our undocumented students as well as our profound dismay over President Trump’s decision to rescind the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. As many of you know, DACA was established in 2012 to support undocumented students and workers brought into the U.S. as young children. This program helps hundreds of thousands of young students and workers across the country, including many Western students, their families and their friends. Since the program began in 2012, nearly 800,000 undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as minors have been granted protection.

Washington State Governor Jay Inslee and Attorney General Bob Ferguson have strongly condemned President Trump’s decision to rescind DACA. And, in a recent letter to the campus community, President Randahwa similarly expressed opposition to ending the program, reasserting Western’s commitment to our undocumented students. Faculty play a key role in strengthening this commitment. Certainly one of the best ways we can support our undocumented students is to educate ourselves. Student Outreach Services is a rich resource, as is the Northwest Immigrants Rights Project.

The National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), national affiliates of United Faculty of Western Washington, have also expressed their strong support for DACA and have denounced the President’s executive order to rescind. The NEA has produced a useful document titled, “The End of DACA: What this Means for Educators and Students,” which offers some clear information about what our undocumented students can expect as well as a number of useful websites.

Finally, undocumented students now find themselves in a frighteningly vulnerable position. Since last November, they have been subject to the insecurity of impending changes in law and policy along with increasing incidences of hate speech, harassment and violence. As faculty, we can support these students by offering them compassion and support. Our undocumented students have legal rights, as well as the right to a safe, supportive learning environment. As faculty, we can actively work to create the conditions under which all our students have access to an excellent education.

Sincerely,

Allison Giffen

Faculty Senate President

Rich Brown

United Faculty of Western Washington President