

To the Meredith Community,

Earlier this week, the U.S. government issued a [news release](#) with updated guidelines that would impact F-1 international students' ability to take classes online during the pandemic.

We care deeply about our international students, and they are valued members of our community. We believe these guidelines are wrong and needlessly cruel at a time of great challenge. International students should not be penalized for prioritizing their health and safety, and institutions should not be penalized for making the best decisions for their campuses in the midst of a pandemic.

Upon receiving this new guidance, we immediately began working to support students who are directly affected. In addition, as the past chair of the board of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, I am proud that NAICU is working on a [massive lobbying initiative](#) to stop this act. I have signed the [American Council on Education's](#) letter encouraging the Department of Homeland Security to withdraw ICE's directive. I have also contacted our legislators to appeal for legislative action to overturn the decision. I urge you to do likewise.

Please be assured that our Office of International Programs (OIP) is making sure we are accurately advising our F-1 international students with well-researched and legally-sound guidance in this very complicated situation. The OIP is working continuously with experts throughout the country to understand the implications of these guidelines so that our international students can make fully informed decisions and persist in their studies at Meredith. We appreciate the outpouring of support from students, faculty, staff, and alumnae, who have expressed concern for our international students and have engaged in advocacy to fight against these guidelines.

Meredith College plans to operate on a flexible schedule of face-to-face, hybrid and online classes for fall semester, and our OIP staff will be working closely with students and their faculty advisers to build course schedules that keep our international students

in status. Under these guidelines, F-1 international students will need to maintain a full-time schedule and enroll in a combination of online and in-person courses. Provost Matthew Poslusny has expressed a commitment to ensure that every F-1 student at Meredith is able to enroll in an in-person course. In fact, members of the Executive Leadership Team and multiple faculty have committed to teaching a face-to-face course for international students, if necessary.

As we work with our students, the new federal directive is also being attacked on the judicial front with multiple lawsuits already filed and more pending. We believe the cases against the directive will prevail, based on the strategic positioning of those lawsuits and related prior rulings, and we will continue working diligently with our partners throughout higher education to stop the directive.

Jo Allen, '80

President, Meredith College