



UndocuAlly Training

**Pre-Work
Research Activity
and Readings**

Pre-Work

1. Visit one or both of these sites

<http://undocu.berkeley.edu/>

<http://web.csulb.edu/divisions/students/ab540>

and identify and write down practices, programs, or policies affecting undocumented students at the chosen institution(s). Bring these with you to the training.

2. Read the rest of this document.

Source of readings: AB540 Ally Training Project

FOUR MAIN CATEGORIES OF PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES VIS A VIS IMMIGRATION LAW

U.S. Citizen

A person who holds citizenship in the United States through birth on U.S. soil, birth to U.S. citizen parents abroad, naturalization, or the naturalization of the parent while the Legal Permanent Resident child is still young (exact age has changed over time).

Legal Permanent Residents, aka. LPRs, aka. Resident aliens, aka., green card holders

Legal Permanent Residents are those immigrants who are allowed to remain in the United States indefinitely. This is the status that puts an immigrant "on the path to U.S. citizenship."

LPR status is granted in two main ways: 1) through petitions based on U.S. citizen or LPR family members (which take a few months for immediate relatives like a spouse, and up to 20 years for more distant relatives like a sibling), and 2) through the sponsorship of an employer who certifies that this person performs a role no American has been found to perform (usually high skilled). Note, therefore, that low-skilled workers will likely find that their only avenue to acquire LPR status is through a family member.

LPR status is not automatically conferred; applicants, even those who are married to a U.S. citizen, must pass a health and background check. Many crimes, including some related to illegal border-crossing, can make the person ineligible for LPR status no matter how compelling their case to acquire it, and even if they are married to a U.S. citizen. Furthermore, most people who have lived in the United States illegally must return to their home countries to apply for LPR status, and once there may be subject to 5-10 year "bars" to reentry; again, this applies even if they have a U.S. citizen spouse.

LPR status can be lost if the immigrant leaves the United States for an extended period of time and is deemed to have abandoned their residence. It can also be lost if a person commits a crime that makes them deportable.

After five years, LPRs become eligible to apply for naturalization. The period is shorter for spouses of U.S. citizens and those who have served in the military.

Non-immigrant alien

A non-immigrant alien has permission to live, and in some cases work, in the United States on a temporary basis. This includes those on tourist visas, student visas, and business visas. It also includes guest-workers, such as seasonal agricultural workers (H2A) and high-skilled temporary workers (H1B). These visas differ from LPR status in that they are not expected to be renewed indefinitely, and do not place the immigrant on any path to LPR status or citizenship.

Undocumented immigrant

Undocumented immigrants are those who live in the United States who are neither citizens nor LPRs, and do not hold a valid non-immigrant visa. They may have entered without inspection, entered on a temporary visa and overstayed, held LPR status which was not renewed, fallen out of the process due to an error or problem, or been brought to the country as young children.

What is an Ally?

An Ally of undocumented students is a person who:

- Acknowledges that undocumented students have a right to be enrolled in the university
- Becomes informed about the rights afforded by law to DACA students
- Finds legal alternative ways that assist students meet academic requisites when the students are excluded by law from regular participation in employment, federal and state aid, federal programs, paid internships, travel, or the use of identification forms that they do not have.
- Believes that children and youth ought not to be targets of anti-immigrant discrimination; i.e., children should be left out of the immigration "wars"
- Knows that because of negative attitudes toward illegal immigration and the lack of legal rights accorded to children and youth who are undocumented, that a person who has legal status has more power in initiating institutional support and can advocate against prejudice and discrimination
- Listens openly, yet does not interrogate the student on their immigration status
- Does not "out" the student to others, without the student's permission
- Does not encourage students to act on matters that may compromise them when they have the opportunity to adjust their status
- Creates a climate of trust that allows the student to reveal their situation at their own pace
- Handles student's emotions with reserve, empathy, and support, and refers to appropriate professional campus staff as needed.
- Follows up on referrals to assess the effectiveness of the referral
- Is clear about his or her own personal motivation in becoming an Ally
- Is committed to maintaining confidentiality and respecting the privacy of people who are undocumented.¹

Becoming an Ally

The four basic levels of becoming an Ally:

¹ Adapted from handouts developed by Shawn-Eric Brooks and Vernon, A. Wall (1990) and by Velvet Miller and Christina Testa, based on materials from "Diversity Works" (1992) and from CSULB, Counseling and Psychological Services, Safe Zone. "Becoming an Ally".

Awareness: Gain awareness by opening yourself to the possibility that some of the students in your class or program are undocumented. Attend training sessions; go on-line and read about DACA, The Dream Act, DAPA.

Knowledge: Begin to understand policies, laws, and practices and how they affect the undocumented students. Educate yourself on the many communities of undocumented immigrants.

Skills: Take your awareness and knowledge and communicate it to others. You can acquire these skills by attending workshops, role-playing with friends and peers, and developing support networks.

Action: To effect change that improves undocumented immigrant student success, you must act. This can be as simple as allowing substitutes for paid internships, placements in non-public agencies where a background check is not required, to assisting students by getting to know them so that you can write effective letters of recommendations when they apply for the only financial aid available to them—scholarships.

Five points to remember:

1. Be aware of your own assumptions about the undocumented. DACA and other undocumented students are a diverse group who are not individually distinguishable from every other student. Each group has its own cultural tendencies about revealing themselves to others.
2. It is better to be preemptive than reactive. Indicate in your course requirements that students who need alternative placements should talk privately with you, or openly offer alternatives to all students, including DACA or other undocumented students.
3. If a student reveals that he or she is undocumented or has DACA, do not interrogate them about their immigration status. Listen attentively. If you do not know how to help them, tell them that you will find out and then get back to that student.
4. Recognize that some others may be intolerant of the undocumented and that you may be a target as well.
5. Do not ever give immigration advice, or suggest that one can identify himself or herself as a US citizen, drive without a license, or use false identification.²

Benefits & Risks of Becoming

Some benefits of being an Ally

- You learn accurate information about the undocumented
- You learn more about the residency and diversity of the DACA student population

²Retrieved online from: www.salp.wmich.edu/Ibg?GLB/Manuel/thingsally.html 9/18/02 and CSULB Safe Zone Becoming an Ally.

- You have the opportunity to develop closer relationships with a wider range of people
- You may make a difference in the lives of young people who see you speak supportively of their population
- You empower yourself to take a more active role in creating a broader student success climate on campus
- You are a role model to others. Your actions may influence others and help them find the inner resources to speak and act in support of undocumented students

Some risks of being an Ally

- You may become the subject of gossip or rumors
- You may experience alienation from others who are not comfortable or tolerant of the undocumented
- Your patriotism, your politics, and your morality may be questioned by people who believe that the undocumented must be deported, even if the children are here through no fault of their own
- Others may speculate about your motivation and wonder what is in it for you
- You may become a target of discrimination
- Due to past negative experiences, undocumented students may not trust you and may question your motivation³

³ Adapted from Evans N.J. & Wall V.A. (1991), "Beyond Tolerance: Gays, Lesbians, and Bisexuals on Campus". Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association and CSULB Safe Zone Becoming an Ally.

When a Student Reveals

When a student comes out to you, they share information about their immigration status with you with the keen awareness of the risks involved: the risk of jeopardizing their relationship with you, the risk of being rejected, and the risk of being denied success in your class or program. Unless you have given some indication of your feelings or beliefs about the undocumented, they may have no way of knowing in advance whether your reaction will be positive or negative.

What are some situations in which someone might come out to you?

- The student may come out to you because you are a member of his or her own ethnic/racial group.
- They feel that you are a person who will be understanding and accepting, and therefore trust you with very personal information.
- They may not know how you will react, but they cannot complete the course requirements without telling you of their inability to comply with the requirements due to their situation.
- They may come out to you because you are in a position to assist them with a concern, provide them information or access to certain resources.
- They may come out to you because another student gave them your name.

How might you feel after someone comes out to you?

- Surprised
- Inquisitive
- Impatient
- Supportive
- Angry
- Not sure how to help
- Not sure what to say
- Not sure how to find out what to do about the matter
- Want to help them seek out alternatives
- Upset about anti-immigrant sentiments

How you react to their disclosure is critical. It can potentially help them or discourage them enough that they will abandon seeking help from you. The more positively the person receives the information, the more comfortable he or she will make the student. The student may even share their ambivalence about telling you. Assure them of confidentiality, do not try to "fix" everything without knowing what could jeopardize a student's immigration status, do not give them false hope or "guesstimates".

What you should not say:

- Are you illegal?
- How did you get here?
- Tell me about your immigration status.
- So how do you live?
- Is your family illegal too?
- I can't believe they let in illegals!
- There are no alternatives to my requirements.

Ways you can help when someone comes out to you:

Do not ask questions that would be considered rude. If you would like more information, ask in an honest and respectful way. If you show a genuine and respectful interest in their situation, they will most likely appreciate it. Some good questions are:

- ✓ Is there some way I can help you?
- ✓ If I do not have the answer to this, is it okay if I ask someone that does?
- ✓ How do you suggest we work this out?

Do not assume that you know what it means to be undocumented. They may not want you to do anything, as much as they need information or referral. The student may just want you to know that they are not slackers; for example, they may want you to know that they simply do not have the financial resources or the ability to travel by car or travel abroad.

- Consider it an honor that the student has trusted you with this very personal information. Thank them for trusting you.
- Clarify with them what level of confidentiality they expect from you. They may not want you to tell anyone.
- If you do not understand something or have questions, do not expect the student to be your informant on the undocumented.
- Remember that not all undocumented students have DACA. However, all TheDream.US Scholars do.
- If you find yourself reacting negatively, remember that your feelings may change. Try to leave the door open for future communications.⁵

Effective Ally Strategies

- Take responsibility for your own education on issues related to the undocumented. Take the initiative to become as knowledgeable as you can on issues of concern to

⁵ Adapted from Northern Illinois Safe Zone Ally Handbook and CSULB Safe Zone Becoming an Ally

students who are immigrants and who may be undocumented, children of undocumented, or US born siblings of undocumented.

- Assume that the issues of prejudice and discrimination of immigrants and others are everyone's concern, not just the concern of those who are targets of prejudice and discrimination.
- Assume that young people have a right to education and they have done nothing wrong to become undocumented.
- Assume that immigration policy changes and it is just a matter of time before there is comprehensive immigration reform that gives law abiding, educated young people a pathway to legal residency and naturalization.
- Assume that U.S. raised undocumented immigrant youth want to stay in the U.S. and realize the "American Dream" as much as any other U.S. born and raised youth.
- Avoid engaging in giving advice or assistance that would compromise their future pathway to citizenship.
- Create opportunities for allies to reduce xenophobia and create a welcoming campus climate.
- Get to know specific students so that you can honestly write them highly effective letters of recommendation that will help them apply for scholarships to finance their education.
- Within the spirit of academic standards and legal requirements, become flexible about course and program requirements so that they do not cause barriers for undocumented students' academic success.
- Graciously accept any gratitude you may receive, but do not expect gratitude. ⁶

⁶ Adapted from Shervor-Marcuse, R (1990) Working assumptions and guidelines for alliance building. Presented as part of an Ally Program at the annual ACPA Conference, Atlanta, GA. and CSULB Safe Zone Becoming an Ally

A Cultural Proficient Ally

Cultural proficiency is not an end state, but an ongoing process. A culturally proficient person acknowledges both individual and group differences. She or he does not walk around wondering or complaining, "Why can't they be more like us." Rather people striving toward cultural proficiency welcome and embrace opportunities to understand themselves as individuals, while at the same time embracing the opportunity to learn. Think of the process of striving toward cultural proficiency as being along the following continuum.

Cultural Destructiveness: the elimination of other people's culture, either on an individual level or on a group level. Extremes include genocide and enslavement. Yet English-only policies or "renaming" a student because you cannot pronounce his or her name is culturally destructive.

"This is America, and everyone speaks English."

Cultural Incapacity: the belief in the superiority of one's own culture and behavior such that it disempowers another's culture. Restrictive immigration laws, overt biases, and discriminatory hiring practices are culturally incapacitating.

"I didn't know she was Mexican. She doesn't look Mexican to me."

Cultural Blindness: acting as if the cultural differences one sees do not matter, or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures.

*"When a student walks in, I don't see color or ability or gender.
I only see a student. "*

Cultural Pre-competence: an awareness of the limitations of one's own skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups. This can happen when underrepresented groups are recruited to a campus/company/organization, but no support is extended, nor is there an effort made to learn more about the differences between groups.

"We need a Korean vice principal to help us with the Korean students. "

Cultural Competence: interacting with other cultural groups using the following:

- Acceptance and respect for differences
- Ongoing reflection on one's own culture and cultural beliefs
- Model culturally inclusive behaviors (i.e. using Spanish pronunciations)
- Adapt one's values and practices to acknowledge culture

"Let's really look at how this school event might impact handicapped persons, immigrants, gay men and lesbians, and those students with no group representation."

Cultural Proficiency: the culturally proficient person

- Values diversity
- Assesses one's own culture, and the impact of one's culture on others
- Manages the dynamics of difference through effective conflict resolution styles
- Incorporates and integrates cultural knowledge into one's practices, and educates others on the damage created by stereotypes, prejudices, and cultural ineptitude
- Adapts to diversity by developing cross-cultural skills and striving to understand the dynamics of cross-cultural differences ⁷

⁷ Adapted from Lindsey, R.B., Nuri-Robbins, K., & Terrel, R.D. (1998). Constructing culturally proficient educators. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press and "Becoming an Ally", Safe Zone Training, CSULB

Creating an Inclusive Climate

Chances are most of us know an undocumented immigrant. About 15 percent of immigrants are undocumented and even documented immigrants can become undocumented at one time or another during the years after they apply for citizenship and when they are naturalized. It is not unusual for immigrant families to have members who are documented and undocumented.

DACA students and other undocumented students look just like their peers and may be in your classes and in your programs. It is only when they feel comfortable with you that they will reveal their status. Therefore, it should be seen as a compliment to you and appreciated as an honor that these vulnerable students see you as a person who can give them honest, direct, and informed advice while protecting their confidentiality.

These guidelines provide some suggestions for creating an environment that is open, comfortable, respectful, and welcoming for students who are undocumented.

- Treat the topic of the student's concern as you would any other human difference
- Avoid making assumptions about a student's status based on their race, ethnicity, accent or appearance
- Avoid judgment language that creates barriers. Do not communicate that the student or their parents are at fault or should be ashamed of their status
- Refuse to tolerate derogatory or anti-immigrant jokes, name calling, or remarks
- Discourage others from assuming that immigrants are scapegoats for economic ills and burdens on society
- Do not grill the student to reveal the details of their immigration status. Respectfully ask for the information you need to find alternatives for the presented problem, but do not inquire into other private matters
- After coming out to the campus, some students are emboldened to become advocates. This is their choice. Advisors should avoid encouraging students to take risks that could jeopardize their future application for naturalization⁷

⁷ Inspired by "Becoming an Ally" Safe Zone Training, CSULB

UndocuAlly Confidentiality Statement

One of the most important aspects of being an UndocuAlly is that you are entrusted with providing an atmosphere of safety to those that come to you. In the simplest of terms, UndocuAlly confidentiality means that what a student says to you is confidential and stays with you.

By posting the UndocuAlly decal, you are sending the message that information shared with you will not be shared with others, unless the student has given you permission to do so. This is important for students who have not openly declared that they are undocumented, since one of the most common concerns is whether they should even tell anyone, and subsequent fears that someone will “out” them. Outing someone refers to telling others about a person’s immigration status without that person’s permission. Moreover, confidentiality is essential in order for students to share their reactions, opinions, and feelings with you.

It is, however also important to recognize that there are limits to confidentiality. It would not be appropriate to maintain confidentiality if a person shares that they intend to physically harm one’s self or another person. Protecting the immediate safety of the individual becomes more important than protecting their confidentiality. If you have concerns or questions about what constitutes confidentiality or limits to confidentiality, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services personnel at (your campus phone).⁸

⁸ Adapted from Prince, J (2002) Group Facilitator Training Workshop, unpublished document, and from Safe Zone Statement on Confidentiality, Counseling and Psychological Services, CSULB