



August 18, 2026

Statement on the Department of Homeland Security Final Rule Amending the Duration of Stay Policy for Nonimmigrant Academic Visas

The American Political Science Association (APSA) condemns the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) [final rule](#) removing the longstanding Duration of Status (D/S) policy, which allows nonimmigrant students on F, J, and I visa types to stay in the U.S. until they finish their degrees. Effective September 15, 2026, the DHS rule replaces the D/S policy with an unrealistic fixed four-year admission period for all students unless they are approved for an exception with stringent criteria. The rule will significantly erode the scientific talent pipeline that has drawn millions of the world's brightest minds to the U.S. for decades.

This misguided rule will further isolate American education by targeting students in fields integral to U.S. innovation. International students attaining post-graduate degrees such as Ph.Ds., physician programs, and advanced law degrees – which frequently require more than four years – will be forced to shift their career aspirations or leave the U.S. entirely if their exceptions are denied. For example, according to the [NCSES Survey of Earned Doctorates](#), in 2024, the median number of years to complete a PhD in social science programs was six years. This rule risks disengaging and isolating U.S. higher education institutions from the global innovation talent pool and international collaboration and furthers the growing [deficit](#) of skills shortages in critical occupations.

Science is built upon years of evidence-based, rigorous research and inquiry. International students bring a plethora of benefits to America's scientific enterprise; along with their expertise, knowledge, and perspectives, international students generate significant economic growth through higher education services, tuition fees, entrepreneurship and innovation. We strongly urge the Administration to rescind the rule. We also urge Congress to reaffirm and protect the ability for international students to access a U.S. education in the time needed for them to complete their degree.

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Founded in 1903, the American Political Science Association is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 11,000 members in more than 80 countries. With a range of programs and services for individuals, departments, and institutions, APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academe to deepen our understanding of politics, democracy, and citizenship throughout the world.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan C. Stokes'.

Susan Stokes,
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Taeku Lee'.

Taeku Lee,
Past President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beth Simmons'.

Beth Simmons,
President-elect

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly A. Mealy'.

Kimberly A. Mealy,
Executive Director

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