

Supporting Our Global Research Community

October 9, 2019

Dear Faculty, Postdoctoral Researchers and Graduate Students:

During the Q&A that followed the President's leadership breakfast last week, a community member asked about the challenges we face in the context of recent federal concerns of "foreign influence" on research at U.S. universities. This issue is very front of mind for many of us in leadership positions at U-M, and we want to share our views on this important issue with all of you.

Without question, we would not be the leading research university in the United States if we weren't also a global university, and that means being open to research collaborations, colleagues, educational efforts and partnerships in and from all parts of the world. In other words, we are a global university and this is inextricably linked to our excellence.

U-M – and by extension our society – has benefited from foreign-born researchers since we hired our first international faculty member in 1846. About 20 percent of Ann Arbor faculty were born outside the United States.

International researchers and collaborations bolster us with not just talent and ambition, but also a broader way of understanding the world. They contribute to our success in developing new businesses and driving our economy. When we work and learn alongside researchers from other countries, cultures demystify, divides are bridged, and we see the commonalities of our shared humanity. This makes the world we all share a safer and more prosperous place.

As President Schlissel said last week, we would be hard-pressed to think of an impactful discovery, invention or medical treatment that didn't build on research in the modern era done by educators in many countries and from many countries.

So while we are under heightened pressure and a presumably greater level of scrutiny around potential international conflicts of interest in our research and the confidentiality of proprietary information, our Office of Research will continue to help our faculty and students comply with existing and new guidelines. This includes a resource developed by the Vice President for Research's office that highlights [best practices for international research and scholarship](#) [1].

However, not for a moment are we going to diminish our commitment to being a welcoming place for students and faculty from all around the world, and to enhance the ability of our faculty and students to establish collaborations and partnerships with talented, hard-working colleagues in every country. Doing

so would be counter to our public mission and would diminish our value as a leading American research university.

Thank you for your outstanding work.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Schlissel
President

Martin A. Philbert
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Rebecca Cunningham
Interim Vice President for Research

Source: [Office of The President](#) [2]

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/supporting-our-global-research-community>

Links

[1] <https://research.umich.edu/research-u-m/international-partnerships/international-research-scholarship-guidance>

[2] <https://president.umich.edu/news-communications/on-the-agenda/supporting-our-global-research-community/>