

Rethinking the American dream?

Link :- <http://www.thehindu.com/education/rethinking-the-american-dream/article17407806.ece>



Some staid advice to students post the U.S. President Donald Trump's decision on immigration restructures

"I think we need a back-up plan. Should we also apply to Canada?" called a worried parent of a Class XII student. She was following up on the U.S. President Donald Trump's executive order on January 27, 2017 barring "entry of all refugees to the United States for 120 days" and thereafter the restrictions on the H1B visas being issued to international aspirants. The student has applied for universities in the United States only and has even close to a hundred thousand dollars' scholarship from one. She's not alone.

Whether you are in school, college or a young professional aiming for the American dream, President

Trump's comments in the last few weeks may have put your plans in jeopardy. Well, you should know that this unconstitutional and discriminatory ban, labelling capable students purely on the basis of their nationalities, is in direct opposition of the values that most U.S. universities stand for.

My colleagues in the U.S. would like it to be known that the universities in America are known for diversity and inclusion and welcome all persons, regardless of age, gender, sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, or disability or handicap. This has reputation been built over years and centuries; to imagine that they are going to succumb to political agendas and diktats, and ruin this branding built over a lifetime, would be pre-mature.

So, here is some advice depending on where you are in your journey.

Already in the U.S.

Wait and watch. Allow the political sentiment to settle into a meaningful ruling and not mere statements.

Maintain a high GPA (above 3.0 minimum)

Work on building your skills and equipping yourself with what the future needs — technology, sustainability, research, progressive business ideas and more.

Explore industry sectors of importance to you that have presence or headquarters across the world; make a Plan B for employment opportunities.

Don't allow gossip to build panic within or around you.

Planning your study

Evaluate why you want to study in the U.S.

Programmes with built-in optional practical training (OPT) and cooperative education programme options must be considered first. They allow you to show your work acumen.

There's never been a better time to apply to some of the most competitive universities in the U.S. This contrarian sentiment is sure to relax acceptance rates and / or the number of offers universities issue. Do evaluate your chances with your counsellor though.

Prepare a Plan B, a set of applications for another country, but don't necessarily create a Plan C or more. This can confuse more than facilitate.

If immigration is the only reason to apply to the United States, think again!

Already have an offer-letter

Congratulations! Meet your counsellor to evaluate the net value of your move to the particular university / course.

Speak to students already studying at the university to understand the sentiment and the culture.

Reason over rapture: Prepare another plan only after due consultation with your counsellor.

Remember, while there's never a wrong time to do the right thing, it is important to decipher the right thing to do. This is just one more test; don't let it 'trump' you.

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