



Multi-Ethnic & Cultural Affairs

Following Attorney General Sessions' announcement that DACA will end unless Congress intervenes, TCC's Co-Presidents issued a [statement of support](#) for DACA students, backed by the SBCTC and colleagues at institutions across the state. Common questions asked of CASA/MECA staff regarding DACA are answered below:

Do the terms undocumented, DACA student, Dreamer, and WASFA student mean the same thing?

No, these terms are not interchangeable. The term **undocumented** can be applied to any person who lives or works in the United States without the legal protections of a citizen or permanent resident. Undocumented people do not automatically receive protection from DACA, and may come from any country, not only those that speak Spanish. The term "illegal" is never appropriate to describe people.

DACA stands for [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#), a 2012 Obama administration executive order allowing people who were brought to the U.S. as children to legally live, go to school, drive, and work if certain criteria are met: DACA does not include a path to citizenship. No new applications will be accepted, and [renewals must be filed by October 5, 2017](#). People with DACA protection are sometimes referred to as **DACAmented**.

TCC has fewer than 20 DACA students currently enrolled that we are aware of: DACAmented students are not required to disclose their status, and **may choose not to disclose** for fear of stigmatization.

The term **Dreamer** is sometimes used to describe the people protected by DACA. This term was coined for the DREAM Act [introduced in Congress](#) before DACA, which has not yet earned a majority vote in either the Senate or the House. Dreamer is simply an identifier, not a policy or set of benefits.

WASFA is the Washington [Application](#) for State Financial Aid. Both undocumented and DACAmented students are ineligible for federal aid, but can receive in-state tuition (HB 1079) and state financial aid through the Real Hope Act (SB 6523) if certain requirements are met. Nearly 50 TCC students receive state aid via WASFA.

How can I support undocumented / DACAmented students at TCC?

- Provide statements of support to your students and staff: we can each help ensure that TCC continues to be a safe place for all people regardless of their immigration status.
- Let all students know you are there to help, but **do not** ask about their immigration status (with the exception of confidential enrollment or financial aid forms). Many students have a mixed-status family, with family members in varying degrees of citizenship/immigration status. The stress of an uncertain status is real, and it is the **student's choice** whether or not to disclose.
- Refer students to CASA/MECA and our Undocumented Student Coordinator, [Margaret Robinson](#) and read our [website and FAQ](#) on undocumented students for more TCC-specific information.
- Educate yourself on the issues. Great resources include:
 - [Tacoma Comm. House](#)
 - [United We Dream](#)
 - [National Immigration Law Center](#)
 - [My Undocumented Life](#)
 - [Informed Immigrant](#)

Thank you!

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