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“No, the Internal Revenue Service Won’t Deport You”: Protecting International Students from Scams

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Developing Strategies for Combating Scams



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Scary Stories

True case scenarios:

- 1) Student called and threatened with immigration status and loved ones in home country.
- 1) A scam “sting” gone right!

Does anyone have an example of an international student who fell prey to a scam?



Strategic Plan to Address: Task Force

- Garnered support from NAFSAns - Leadership, Houston Forum for Advisors to Internationals
- Identified government official stakeholders and others
- Defined scope and timeline of group and invited
- Met together by Zoom
- Deliverables
- Continuous follow-up
- Article published about scams targeting internationals
U.S. News & World Report (July, 2021)

[International Student Scams: What to Know | Best Colleges | US News](#)



Task Force Strategic Plan

ATTENTION INTERNATIONALS!

Beware of scams!



STOP

If you are being asked or feeling pressured to give information or send payment, stop! Check the legitimacy of the request before taking action!



COLLECT CALLER INFO

Ask for the person's name (proper spelling), agency/office, contact info, and details about the request. Then say you need to follow up with your institution first and hang up!



ALERT AUTHORITY

Contact your international office or campus police/security office to help you determine if this is a real request.



MAKE REPORT

Your international office, campus police, or security office can help you determine the best way to report a scam. Reports may be made to the police, government agencies, IT office, etc.



Best Practices for Educating Internationals



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Best Practices

- Include information during orientation
- Schedule reminder emails/messages
- Post on social media
- Utilize maven students
- Post fliers around campus
- Use the graphic
- Introduce a video
- Communicate with IT, Administration, and Faculty
- Be the go-to person if someone is possibly scammed
- Anything else?



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Ways of Reporting

- On-Campus
 - Campus Police
 - International Student Services
 - Make students feel safe
- Off-Campus
 - Local police
 - Government Resources



Developing Strategies

Can you create a task force on your campus?

- Would create campus buy-in?
- Who do you need to include?
- What is the timeline?
- Who would you invite?

What is the Annual Timeline for Communicating with Your Students?

- Check-in/Orientation
- Social Media reminders
- Year-round fliers
- Email announcements



Resources

- **NAFSA** has a page for scams targeting internationals
(*NAFSA membership required for access*)
[Protecting International Students and Scholars from Scams | NAFSA](#)
- **SEVP Study in the States**
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/2015/08/scams-targeting-international-students-are-rise>
- **Rice Office of International Students & Scholars**
<https://oiss.rice.edu/scams>
- Most **Government Agencies'** Websites



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Questions?

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