Every academic year, 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school in the United States. Currently, around 5%-10% of these 65,000 high school graduates move on to a higher education institution (Gonzales, 2009). Maryland allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition under certain conditions. Learn more about the Maryland DREAM Act [here].

Do not inquire about a student’s immigration status. Students may have legitimate fears about disclosing this information. Educators and other personnel should not make assumptions about students’ immigration status.

Convey openness and assurance of confidentiality in discussing the topic, if a student chooses to disclose their immigration status.

Use inclusive language such as “undocumented student” “undocumented immigrant” “people without documents,” or “people without legal status.” The term “illegal alien” can make students feel unwelcome.

Learn the facts.

Consider establishing welcoming spaces, while respecting student privacy, where undocumented students have the opportunity to learn and engage with their peers without fear or intimidation.

Be sensitive to the limits that undocumented students face in your classroom activities and discussions.

Not every student is eligible to register to vote, to travel out of the country, or feels comfortable discussing their family’s migration story.

For more questions, please email undoc@umd.edu.