



GSOC-UAW LOCAL 2110

MAKING A BETTER NYU SINCE 1998

The Union for Graduate Employees at New York University

In support of prospective Iranian international students

**To
NYU Deans, Admissions, and Office of Global Services**

As of the writing of this document, the streets of Iranian cities have seen continuous rioting over gas prices for almost a week. Since Saturday, November 16, the Iranian government has decided to shut down access to the internet throughout the country to suppress any further street organizing. Moreover, test centers offering the required language exams for entry into US universities (TOEFL/IELTS) have not been doing so. There is no planned end date for the internet shutdown, and as long as it is in place one can expect the testing will not be held. Of course, the ability to even access the online application forms for universities is decidedly compromised as well.

Access to education outside the country is one of the few ways Iranian youth have been able to escape the oppressive regime at home. It is one of the main drivers for the existence of the Iranian diaspora in the United States and the rest of the West, since even before the revolution in '79. Moreover, the students leaving to study tend to consistently rank among the highest in their disciplines, although access to education should not be contingent on that. In the current situation, they cannot even apply or take the exams to show their English proficiency. If the situation continues, it could delay their applications significantly, or artificially worsen them due to the time pressure.

This takes place in the context of persistent and ill-justified US sanctions on Iran, sanctions which have dealt tremendous amounts of damage to the economy and have contributed to the conditions that sparked the riots in the first place. As people residing in the United States, it is important for us to recognize our own government's responsibility in the situations, and alleviate the suffering of Iranian youth by allowing them to apply fairly to our universities.

As a union representing graduate workers from all over the world, we see the current situation in Iran as a clear barrier to those seeking to come to NYU or any other US university to study and work. These Iranian youth deserve the opportunity to explore educational opportunities beyond those in their home country, and universities like NYU undoubtedly benefit from their presence and contribution to our international student body. Moreover, we must stand in solidarity with our many Iranian members who would not be here if they had been denied access to these same services.

For these reasons, we request that NYU make changes in their undergraduate and graduate admissions policies this year for the special case of Iranian students, including allowing for a delay in their application submission.

Sincerely,
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