

Training Scenarios for Allies

1. Students are in your first semester orientation class and you announce that nursing is not available to “illegal” students. You do not know who in the group is undocumented but when you announce this, you see one or two faces turn from excitement to anger. What might be another way to let students know that majors that require licensure are not open to undocumented students? How could an Ally handle this situation differently?
2. You require that students attend a scheduled test. You are approached by a student who asks to be allowed to take the test before or after that date/time because of a personal situation. You inquire as to the excuse and finally the student shows you a letter from the immigration service that tells her that her interview is scheduled at the same time as your test. You push further and remark, “So you are illegal?” The student says she is undocumented but this appointment will result in her getting her green card. You allow the student to take the test a day before. When she comes back to class you announce gleefully to the class that Nelly is now a citizen and she should be congratulated. How could an ally handle this situation differently?
3. Your class requires an internship in a public agency that requires a background check. One student is reluctant to ask you for help so you approach him and he tells you that he cannot go through the background check. You ask him to explain. He tells you that he is an undocumented student and he cannot do the internship as required. How could an Ally handle this situation?
4. Your class requires a field trip to the Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Students are told to take a valid California identification. A student tells you that he is an AB 540 student and his only ID is his student card and his passport. He asks if that would be sufficient. How could an Ally handle this situation?
5. It is the day for students to take the writing test. Most of the proctors are students unfamiliar with AB 540. When a student approaches the front of the line she is asked for valid ID. She produces her student ID and her Mexican Matricula. The student ID is not considered a valid ID and the proctor is not familiar with the Matricula. How could an Ally handle this situation differently?
6. You are the advisor of a student club that is planning a trip out of state for spring break. The students want to gamble, see the shows and have a good time. Some of the students in the group are undocumented. How should an Ally handle this situation?
7. A student tells you that he is using his father’s SSN card so he can apply for financial aid. He worries if he should apply because his own parents are undocumented. How should an Ally handle this situation?
8. You observe that some of the undocumented students that you know are visibly distraught, depressed, or absent after a recent legislative setback to a bill that would have given undocumented students a path toward legalization and made it easier to pay for college. After asking them about it, some of them tell you that they feel like giving up on getting their degrees –“It’s pointless!” How could an ally respond to the students? How would your response be different if you did not personally know which students were undocumented?