News

Catholic University of America campus seen from nearby cathedral bell tower.

Catholic University of America is seen from the bell tower of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. (OSV News/Bob Roller)

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A student at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., has had their visa revoked by the federal government, adding a Catholic school founded by U.S. bishops to the growing list of colleges where international students have had their visas revoked by President Donald Trump's administration.

According to a CUA spokesperson, the student was removed from the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, a database the Department of Homeland Security uses to track international students and their statuses.

"We can acknowledge that a student's SEVIS record has been terminated by the Department of Homeland Security," CUA spokesperson Karna Lozoya said in a statement to RNS. "As a member of our learning community, we have been

supportive of the student in ensuring he is supported and informed of his rights."

Lozoya did not offer specific details about the student or their situation.

The move is part of a sweeping immigration crackdown by the Trump administration, with the federal government changing the legal status of more than 1,300 international students in the U.S. — often with little to no explanation — according to Inside Higher Ed. A lawsuit filed on Wednesday by some impacted students against the government alleges the reasons for the revocations are often tied to minor offenses such as traffic stops or criminal cases that were dismissed.

The number of Catholic colleges impacted is unclear. On Monday (April 14), another Catholic school in the nation's capital, Georgetown University, announced that at least 10 students on its campus have had their visas revoked. In addition, at least two students at Fordham University in New York City have had their visas revoked.

Officials at Notre Dame, one of the most prominent Catholic universities in the country, did not respond to multiple requests to detail how many, if any, of its own students are impacted.

But while Fordham and Georgetown are often associated with more liberal versions of U.S. Catholicism, CUA, which was founded by U.S. bishops who also sit on the school's board of trustees, has long been connected with the tradition's conservative wing.

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Catholic leaders have been vocal opponents of the administration's immigration policies, with Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago criticizing Trump's plans for mass deportation in a sermon before the president even assumed office. Vice President JD Vance, who is Catholic, feuded with bishops on the issue shortly after being inaugurated, making a theological argument that was ultimately refuted by Pope Francis himself in a letter that also condemned Trump's mass deportation plans.

In the letter, which was addressed to U.S. bishops, Francis said that "the act of deporting people who in many cases have left their own land for reasons of extreme poverty, insecurity, exploitation, persecution or serious deterioration of the environment, damages the dignity of many men and women, and of entire families,

and places them in a state of particular vulnerability and defenselessness."

Meanwhile, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is currently suing the administration over its decision to freeze the refugee program and cut off funds to religious groups that partner with the government to resettle refugees. And last month, Catholic bishops co-authored a report with evangelical Christian groups noting that 1 in 12 Christians in the U.S. could be impacted by Trump's deportation push, a number that rises to 1 in 5 Catholics, according to the report.

The Trump administration's crackdown has impacted more than 210 colleges and universities, including religious colleges such as Baylor University and Oklahoma Christian University, according to Inside Higher Ed.

Whether international students at divinity schools and seminaries have been impacted remains unclear: Many did not respond to requests for comment, and while Yale Divinity School and University of Chicago Divinity acknowledged students at their parent universities have had their visa status revoked — four at Yale and three at the University of Chicago, as well as four recent graduates — officials at both institutions declined to specify whether any were students at the divinity schools.

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** feature series. View the full series.