



THE EQUAL PROTECTION PROJECT
A Project of the Legal Insurrection Foundation
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July 21, 2025

BY EMAIL (OCR@ed.gov)

Craig Trainor, Acting Assistant Secretary
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

BY EMAIL (OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov)

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights – Atlanta Office
U.S. Department of Education
61 Forsyth St. S.W., Suite 19T10
Atlanta, GA 30303-8927

**Re: Civil Rights Complaint Against University of Miami Regarding
Discriminatory Scholarship Program**

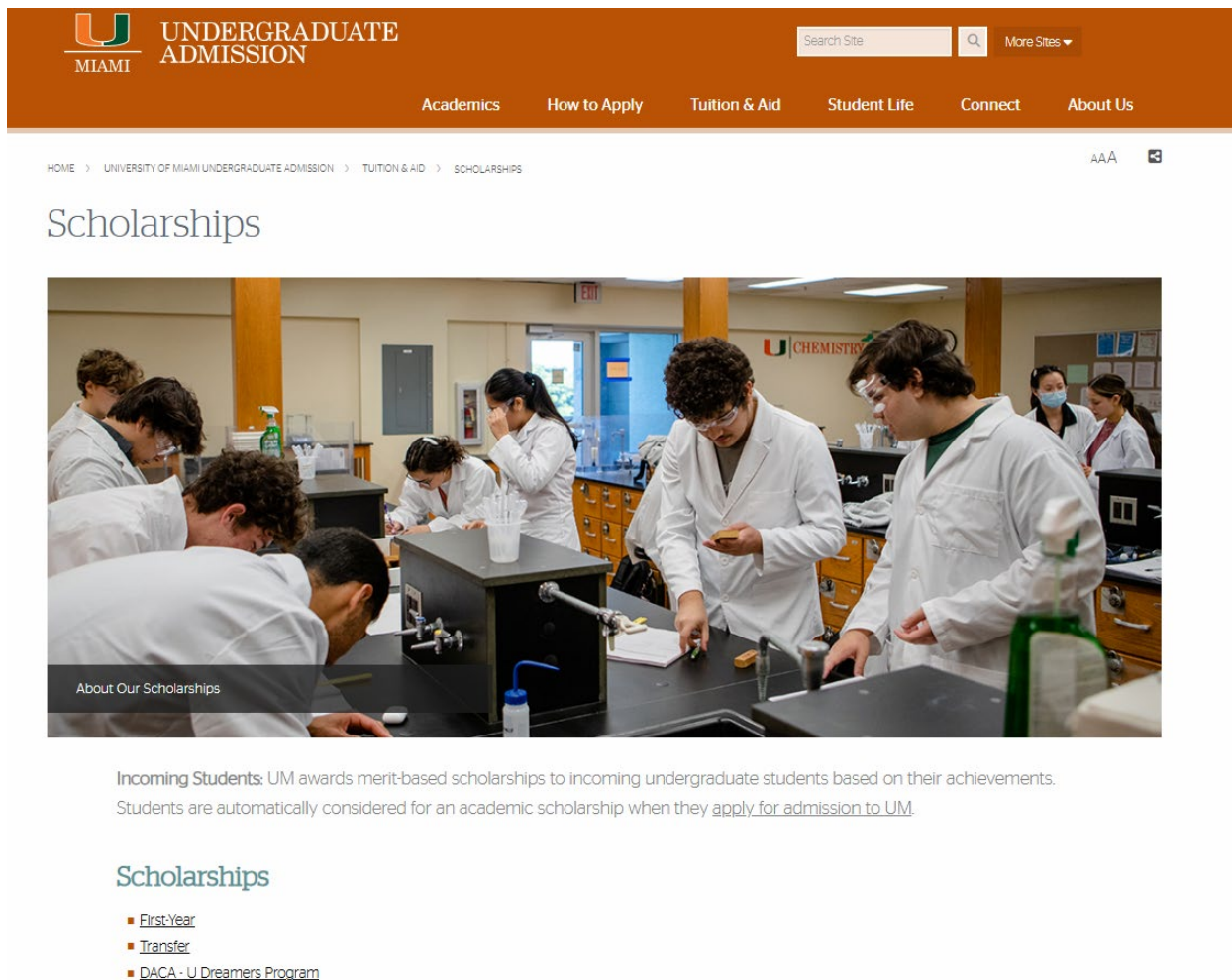
Dear Mr. Trainor and OCR Staff:

This is a federal civil rights complaint pursuant to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR") discrimination complaint resolution procedures.¹ We write on behalf of the Equal Protection Project of the Legal Insurrection Foundation, a non-profit that, among other things, seeks to ensure equal protection under the law and that opposes unlawful discrimination in any form.

We bring this civil rights complaint against the University of Miami ("UMiami"), a private university, for discrimination in the UDreamers scholarship program open only to DACA/undocumented students, in violation of Title VI.

¹ See 42 U.S.C. § 2000d-1; 34 C.F.R. §§ 100.7, 100.8, and 100.9.

UMiami offers three types of scholarships: First-Year, Transfer, and DACA scholarships.² Students must meet specific eligibility requirements to receive these awards. All applicants are automatically considered for academic scholarships when they apply for admission to UMiami.



The screenshot shows the University of Miami Undergraduate Admission website. The header is orange with the UMI logo and navigation links: Academics, How to Apply, Tuition & Aid, Student Life, Connect, and About Us. A search bar and 'More Sites' link are also present. The breadcrumb trail reads: HOME > UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION > TUITION & AID > SCHOLARSHIPS. The main heading is 'Scholarships'. Below it is a large photo of students in a chemistry lab with the text 'About Our Scholarships' overlaid. A text block states: 'Incoming Students: UM awards merit-based scholarships to incoming undergraduate students based on their achievements. Students are automatically considered for an academic scholarship when they [apply for admission to UM](#).' Below this is a 'Scholarships' section with three bullet points: 'First-Year', 'Transfer', and 'DACA - U Dreamers Program'.

The scholarship listed below is currently offered to UMiami students and applicants for admission, according to the UMiami website, and violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VI”) and its implementing regulations³ by illegally discriminating against students based on their national origin.

² <https://admissions.miami.edu/undergraduate/financial-aid/scholarships/index.html>
[<https://archive.is/wip/Zoswm>] (accessed on July 20, 2025).

³ 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.; 28 C.F.R. Part 100.

The scholarship listed below is available for the 2025-2026 school year.⁴

U Dreamers Program

Link: <https://admissions.miami.edu/undergraduate/financial-aid/scholarships/daca/index.html>

Archived Link: <https://archive.ph/wip/a0drC>

Discriminatory Requirement: “The U Dreamers Program is available to eligible first-year and transfer **DACA and undocumented applicants** seeking to enroll in the fall semester.

HOME > UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION > TUITION & AID > SCHOLARSHIPS > U DREAMERS PROGRAM

AAA



U Dreamers Program

First-Year

Transfer Students

DACA

U Dreamers Program History

Additional Scholarships & Resources

The U Dreamers Program is available to academically talented and admissible Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and undocumented high school seniors and transfer students. UM is committed to providing students of all nationalities and citizenship statuses with opportunities to nurture their talents and pursue their goals.

Through the U Dreamers Program, the University of Miami is committed to meeting 100 percent of demonstrated financial need for admitted students. Depending on the amount of the aid offer, this could potentially cover tuition and mandatory fees, food and housing based on our published cost of attendance, books, transportation, and personal expenses. Scholarships that are in excess of qualified educational expenses (i.e., tuition and mandatory fees) may be subject to a tax. Please refer to the [IRS Publication 970 Tax Benefits for Education](#) to learn more about which expenses do not qualify as educational expenses, including, but not limited to, living expenses, meal plans, and any other expenses not required to attain a degree in your field of study.

Eligibility Criteria

The U Dreamers Program is available to eligible first-year and transfer DACA and undocumented applicants seeking to enroll in the fall semester.

The application and supporting documents must be received by the stated deadlines in order for applicants to be eligible for U Dreamers consideration.

Because DACA only applies to persons born outside the United States who meet certain additional criteria, restricting scholarship eligibility to DACA recipients constitutes discrimination based on national origin and violates Title VI. *See* <https://www.uscis.gov/DACA> [<https://archive.is/PfwjL>] (accessed July 20, 2025). Similarly, “undocumented” status only applies to students born outside the United States. This scholarship discriminates against American-born students.⁵

⁴ Emphasis (bold) in the quoted UMiami description of the scholarship. Links ‘live’ and in use as of July 20, 2025.

⁵ Although OCR does not enforce Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that statute makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race or color in a place of “public accommodation,” such as UMiami. 42 U.S.C. § 2000(a)(a). These scholarships also violate Florida state law. Fla. Stat. § 1000.05 (2024). Finally, these scholarships violate UMiami’s own nondiscrimination policy. *See* <https://welcome.miami.edu/privacy-and-legal/non-discrimination/index.html> [<https://archive.ph/wip/vmHRj>] (accessed July 20, 2025).

Regardless of UMiami's reasons for offering, promoting, and administering such a discriminatory scholarship, it is violating Title VI by doing so. It does not matter if the recipient of federal funding discriminates in order to advance a benign "intention" or "motivation." *Bostock v. Clayton Cnty.*, 590 U.S. 644, 661 (2020) ("Intentionally burning down a neighbor's house is arson, even if the perpetrator's ultimate intention (or motivation) is only to improve the view."); accord *Automobile Workers v. Johnson Controls, Inc.*, 499 U.S. 187, 199 (1991) ("the absence of a malevolent motive does not convert a facially discriminatory policy into a neutral policy with a discriminatory effect" or "alter [its] intentionally discriminatory character"). "Nor does it matter if the recipient discriminates against an individual member of a protected class with the idea that doing so might favor the interests of that class as a whole or otherwise promote equality at the group level." *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard Coll.*, 600 U.S. 181, 289 (2023) (Gorsuch, J., concurring).

OCR Has Jurisdiction

UMiami is a private university that receives federal funds, including from the U.S. Department of Education.⁶ It is therefore liable for violating Title VI, and OCR therefore has jurisdiction over this complaint.

The Complaint Is Timely

This complaint is timely brought because it includes allegations of discrimination based on race, color, and/or national origin. This scholarship is currently active.⁷

Request For Investigation And Enforcement

The Office for Civil Rights has the power and obligation to investigate UMiami's role in creating, funding, promoting and administering this scholarship and to impose whatever remedial relief is necessary to hold it accountable for that unlawful conduct. This includes, if necessary, imposing fines, initiating administrative proceedings to suspend or terminate federal financial assistance and referring the case to the Department of Justice for judicial proceedings to enforce the rights of the United States under federal law.

Accordingly, we respectfully ask that the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights promptly open a formal investigation, impose such remedial relief as the law permits for the benefit of those who have been illegally excluded from UMiami's scholarship based on discriminatory national origin criteria, and ensure that all ongoing and future scholarships and programming at UMiami comports with federal civil rights laws.

⁶ See https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_P063P241285_091 [<https://archive.ph/wip/0e6Ne>] (accessed on July 20, 2025).

⁷ <https://admissions.miami.edu/undergraduate/financial-aid/scholarships/daca/index.html> [<https://archive.ph/wip/a0drC>] (accessed July 20, 2025).

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Respectfully submitted,

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