

SEVP Spotlight

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Inside This Issue

- 1 Three Pillars of National Security | Director's Corner
- 2 SEVP Update | SEVIS II Update
- 3 Outreach | DSO Knowledge Bulletin
- 4 SEVP Changes | Contact SEVP

Three Pillars of National Security

The mission of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) rests upon the following three pillars:

1.) *Protecting the Nation:* As a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) program, SEVP's top priority is the safety of our country and our people. We accomplish this by directly supporting U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) law enforcement activities, as well as the work of numerous other agencies and task forces.

2.) *Public Diplomacy:* By living and learning in the United States, international students become our most important cultural ambassadors by creating intercultural relationships between the United States and other nations. SEVP supports this expansion of cultural understanding and improved international relations.

3.) *Economic Viability:* In the 2009-2010 academic year, international students contributed \$20 billion to the U.S. economy through their expenditures on tuition and living expenses, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. That makes U.S. higher education an engine for economic growth, as well as one of the nation's leading service sector exports.

Together, these pillars allow the United States to attract and retain the best and brightest international students to study and remain in the country, while providing security and safety of the American people.



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

www.ice.gov

With the start of the new academic year, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano launched the Study in the States Initiative. This initiative represents a renewed effort to encourage the "best and brightest" international students to study and work in the United States. The ultimate goal of the Study in the States Initiative is to enhance our nation's economic, scientific and technological competitiveness, while maintaining our strong commitment to national security.

This innovative initiative will strengthen and support the mission of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which is to provide timely and accurate information to prospective and current international students, academic officials and government organizations that work with international students. SEVP collects, maintains and provides information so that only legitimate international students or exchange visitors can gain entry to the United States. Through means of our signature technology, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the program shares a commitment and a responsibility with the educational community to maintain support for international students and exchange visitors in the United States. For more information

Director's Corner

DHS Launches Study in the States Initiative



on SEVIS, reference Page 2 of this newsletter.

The Study in the States Initiative will enhance SEVP's focus

and strengthen relationships with the community of international students. In support of the initiative, SEVP has launched a website, studyinthestates.dhs.gov, to serve as a clearinghouse of information for international students. In addition, DHS will emphasize intergovernmental collaboration, particularly at stakeholder conferences, to communicate with the academic community in a clearer and more unified fashion. You can learn more about the Study in the States Initiative on Page 2 of this newsletter.

SEVP is pleased to present this inaugural issue of our quarterly newsletter, which will serve as a forum to help the academic community and government partners to better understand our mission and to communicate key SEVP news. On behalf of SEVP, thank you for your continued dedication and support for the international education mission.

*A message from Louis M. Farrell,
Director of ICE's Student and Exchange
Visitor Program*

New DHS Initiative: Study in the States

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is playing a critical role in supporting Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano's Study in the States Initiative to attract the "best and brightest" international students and assist them in learning about expanded post graduate opportunities. The initiative will examine the existing student and exchange visitor visa programs, and programs designed for students after they have completed their courses of study in order to identify problem areas and recommend possible improvements.

The initiative will also seek to enhance coordination between the various federal agencies that play a role in implementing the nation's student visa and exchange visitor programs.

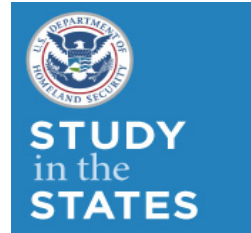
To enhance the U.S. government's communication with key stakeholders in the academic and student communities, DHS has deployed a dedicated, state-of-the-art website specifically for international students and exchange visitors. This SEVP sponsored website, studyinthestates.dhs.gov, consolidates various sources of immigration information to serve as an official government clearinghouse of information to better serve international students and exchange visitors.

The website will serve as an information portal for SEVP, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and other government agencies involved with the international student process to communicate more effectively

with international students, academia and the public at large.

The use of other media tools, such as a dedicated Twitter and Facebook presence will allow the U.S. government to share new information more quickly and to foster dialogue with international students, exchange visitors and academic communities.

The website was launched by DHS Secretary Napolitano on September 16, 2011. Make sure you bookmark this page and spread the word: studyinthestates.dhs.gov.



SEVIS II Update

Status Report on SEVIS II: Webinars and Workshops

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) continues to progress with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) II development, which is tentatively scheduled to deploy November 2013. In addition to refining the system's technical requirements, we have expanded our outreach efforts to provide information to our government partners and the user community.



In preparation for the scheduled launch of SEVIS II, SEVP developed a series of seven webinars to provide

updates and walk attendees through draft SEVIS II screens developed during the requirements visualization process. More than 600 people across the country took advantage of these webinars, providing participants with the opportunity to receive important information and ask questions. Watch for an upcoming webinar schedule on the SEVP website in fall 2011.

Additionally in August, SEVP and the Department of State hosted nearly 150 SEVIS users at a three-day workshop on the SEVIS II transition. The participants represented many types and sizes of schools and sponsors from across the United States. The workshop allowed participants the opportunity to voice concerns and recommendations for the transition.



With this feedback, a comprehensive transition plan to manage all aspects of the move to SEVIS II will be developed and implemented. The success of the SEVIS II transition workshop will allow SEVP to continue to engage the user community through teleconferences, feedback tools, webinars and conference participation.

Photos (above): SEVIS II Transition Workshop

Outreach

SEVP to Boost Outreach Efforts

Beginning with the fall 2011 season, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) will coordinate with other agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to expand outreach to the academic community in support of the Study in the States Initiative.

This will expand upon SEVP’s existing outreach efforts, which include participating in approximately 60 major conferences, meetings and workshops each year. Participation in these events allows SEVP to relay updated information on policies, regulations and program initiatives to stakeholders. Of the 14 conferences SEVP will participate in this fall, 10 are Association of International Educators regional conferences.

Another goal of the Study in the States Initiative is to enhance outreach coordination between the various DHS agencies that play a role in implementing the student



visa and exchange visitor programs. These agencies include the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (specifically Counterterrorism and Criminal Exploitation Unit (CTCEU)), U.S. Visitor and

Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (specifically E-verify, Systematic Alien Verification and Entitlements Program (SAVE), and Transformation Project Office).

In the past, these agencies have engaged in their own dedicated outreach activities with the academic community. However, these agencies will now seek to enhance the effectiveness of these activities by coordinating their efforts into a “One DHS” approach. This will include co-presenting sessions at key academic and industry conferences, as well as joint participation in federal panels to provide stakeholders with a unified message.

Upcoming SEVP Regulatory Changes

In the coming year, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) will make the following significant changes to their regulations:

- Fall 2011: As part of a larger Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiative, SEVP Policy will partner with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for a non-substantive rewrite of pertinent parts of the 8 CFR 214. It will focus on the reorganization of sections of regulations and remove references to processes that occurred before the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).
- Spring 2012: SEVP plans to publish a proposed rule to support the deployment of SEVIS II. This substantive rewrite will include key elements to support the system, such as electronic signatures, customer account access and the paperless immigration process.

SEVP Security Watch: Beware Password Sharing

SEVP has noticed an increase in password sharing by SEVIS users. Password sharing is a major security risk factor that could compromise the accountability, integrity and confidentiality of

SEVIS. For this reason, SEVP prohibits password sharing. Principal designated school officials and other designated school officials receive access to SEVIS to conduct official DHS business only. Sharing SEVIS user ID or passwords is a violation of DHS Sensitive Systems Policy Directive 4300A, dated March 14, 2011. This policy directs:

- DHS users must not share identification or authentication materials of any kind, nor may any DHS user allow any other person to operate any DHS system by employing the user’s identity.
- DHS users must not share personal passwords.
- Non-DHS federal employees, contractors or others working on behalf of DHS who fail to comply with department security policies are subject to having their access to DHS systems and facilities terminated, whether or not the failure results in criminal prosecution.



Please help us prevent any unauthorized user from gaining access to SEVIS. Do not share your user ID or password with anyone.

SEVP Changes

SEVP Establishes Analysis & Operations Center

In August, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) established its operating capability for the SEVP Analysis & Operations Center (SAOC). The SAOC serves as SEVP's competency center for operations and analysis in support of the SEVP mission.

The SAOC will provide all SEVP stakeholders with a single interface for high-quality, timely analytical products, school compliance and student issue operational services. The SAOC will also serve as the central organization for the planning, execution and coordination of SEVP operations.



Enhanced SEVP Response Center

After the planned deployment of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) II, the SEVP Response Center (SRC) will expand to an Enhanced SRC (E-SRC) with increased scope. In an effort to standardize information and regulatory guidance disseminated, the current SRC serves as the single point of contact for all program operations inquiries. The objective of the SRC is to improve overall customer service to SEVP's key academic stakeholders.

The E-SRC will assume responsibility for technical calls that the SEVIS Help Desk handles. Based on improved capabilities in SEVIS II, students will have more responsibility for managing their own accounts, allowing the E-SRC to focus on responding to inquiries regarding those accounts. Finally, the E-SRC will provide support for system access requests, as well as SEVP policy related issues.

With these additional responsibilities, the E-SRC staff will expand to provide support to approximately two million potential stakeholders.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is dedicated to maintaining open communication with international students in an effort to provide the necessary support needed while studying in the United States. SEVP has multiple contact options:

- If you need assistance with passwords or Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) technical help, call the SEVIS Help Desk at 800-892-4829 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time or email SEVISHelpdesk@hp.com
- If you are a PDSO/DSO or RO/ARO with technical issues requiring immediate attention, please email Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov

Student and Exchange Visitor Program
Attn: (Branch Name or Job Title)
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
500 12th Street, SW Stop 5600
Washington, D.C. 20536-5600

Phone: 703-603-3400
Email: SEVP@dhs.gov

Our offices are open Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, except holidays.

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