

SEVIS Release 5.8 System Changes

Production Release Date: April 18, 2008

The following summarizes the system changes to SEVIS with Release 5.8.

SEVIS Batch

There are no changes to SEVIS Batch File Processing (Batch); therefore, no updates to the SEVIS Batch schema are necessary.

F/M School Users

OPT Extension

A new link, Extend, will be available in the Command menu of the OPT Employment page as long as the following criteria are met:

- The student education level is Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate
- The student is currently in a period of Approved post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) – i.e. the student's program end date (PED) is in the past; the employment start date was after the PED and is in the past; and the employment end date is in the future
- The student does not have an existing OPT Extension request in Pending or Approved status

Prior to requesting an OPT Extension, school officials must ensure the student earned a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) designated Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate degree. The STEM Designated Degree Program List is available at www.ice.gov/sevis (the SEVP Web site). **The student's degree code must be on this list; if not, the USCIS Service Center will deny the OPT Extension and the student's filing fee will not be refunded.**

As with all OPT students, school officials must continue to maintain records on the student for the full period of the OPT Extension. The OPT Extension students are also subject to new requirements that were added to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 8, Sections 214.2(f)(10) to (f)(13) by an Interim Final Rule published in the Federal Register. A link to the Federal Register notice and sections of the CFR that are relevant to OPT are available at the SEVP Web site.

For students who meet these outlined criteria, the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO)/ Designated School Official (DSO) may use the Extend link to request a 17-month OPT Extension to an Approved, post-completion OPT segment. The OPT Extension request will be submitted via the Extend OPT Employment page, on which the following fields will be required:

- Employer Name
- Employer Address
- OPT Comments/Remarks

School officials will not have the option to enter employment dates for OPT Extension requests. The OPT Extension employment start date will be pre-filled with the date after the employment end date of the current Approved OPT segment on which the OPT Extension is being requested; the OPT Extension employment end date will be pre-filled as 17 months from the OPT Extension employment start date.

Upon submission of the OPT Extension request, the PDSO/DSO will be provided instructions saying: the OPT Extension requires adjudication, the PDSO/DSO should print the Form I-20, and the student should include the Form I-20 with the other required documentation when filing a Form I-765 with USCIS. Also, any future date Pending status OPT requests on the student record will automatically be canceled.

Student Event History

School officials will be able to view the history of events for any student/dependent that is currently or was previously associated with the PDSO/DSO campus. Any actions taken on a student/dependent record while at that campus, including creation and subsequent updates, will be captured as events and displayed to the school user in the event history.

Return to Initial Status Correction

When the PDSO changes the status of a student from Active to Initial via a Return to Initial Status Correction Request, both the Current Session End Date and the Next Session Start Date will be automatically removed.

Requested Status

- OPT, OPT Extension, Off-Campus Employment, M-1 Transfer, and M-1 Extension requests submitted via SEVIS Real-Time Interactive (RTI) will indicate a default status of Requested. For these requests to change to Pending status, SEVIS must receive an update from the Computer Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS) that the student benefit application has been accepted by a USCIS Service Center.
- An alert of students with requests in Requested status for more than 90 days will be provided to school users. Requests in Requested status for more than 180 days will be canceled.

Secondary Major and Minor

Both the Secondary Major and Minor fields will be required when creating or updating an F-1 student record via SEVIS RTI. If the F-1 student does not have a secondary major or minor, the school official will be provided the option of selecting None.

Request Change to Student Status Correction

The transfer-in school PDSO/DSO will no longer have the ability to perform a Request Change to Student Status Correction Request on student records transferred in Terminated or Completed status. Since these records do not have data in all of the required fields, they cannot be placed into Initial or Active status.

Termination Reasons List

The Termination Reasons drop-down list on the Request Change to Student Status page and the Request Change to Termination Reason page will be corrected to only include the relevant Termination Reasons.

Transfer History

Student transfer events will be captured for the purpose of tracking event history. The PDSO/DSO will be able to view the history of transfer events for any student associated with the school official's campus.

Request Change to Student Request Correction

When requesting a correction to set an F-1 or M-1 student Change of Status (COS) request to Approved status, the PDSO/DSO will be required to enter the COS Benefit Start Date on the Request Correction page. For an M-1 student, the PDSO/DSO will also be required to enter the Program End Date on the Request Correction page.

Form I-20 Modifications

- The Primary Major code and description will print for both F-1 and M-1 students on page 3.
- Pending status and current or future Approved status OPT Extensions will print for F-1 students in the Current Authorizations section on page 3.

J Program Sponsor Users

Exchange Visitor Event History

Program sponsor officials will be able to view the history of events for any exchange visitor (EV) and/or dependent that is currently or was previously associated with their program. Any actions taken on an EV/dependent record while at that program, including creation and subsequent updates, will be captured as events and displayed to the Responsible Officer (RO)/Alternate Responsible Officer (ARO) in the event history.

Out of Country for EVs in the Research Scholar and Professor Categories

An RO/ARO will have the ability to enter information concerning a Professor or Research Scholar whose exchange activities require them to travel outside of the United States to participate in collaborative research projects and/or associated program activities for a period of time during their sponsorship. A new link titled Create Out of Country will be available on the Exchange Visitor Information screen. The RO/ARO will be required to enter data concerning the EV's time out of the country including begin and end dates and their out of country address. During the time the exchange visitor (EV) is out of the country they will remain in Active status. Starting on the Out of Country Begin Date and ending on the Out of Country End Date, the Reason field of the Status section of the Exchange Visitor Information screen will display 'Out of Country'. A new alert will be provided indicating an EV's out of country end date is approaching in 30 days or less; the information entered concerning the EV's time out of the country can be updated at any time. The RO/ARO will also see a new list containing EVs that have a current or future out of country segment.

Updating Program Official's Title

Program sponsor officials will be able to update their title along with their telephone number, fax number and email address. Officials who perform duties for more than one program sponsor or who are also a PDSO or DSO for a school can have only one title, telephone and fax number, and email address in SEVIS. If these fields are updated, the new data will display for all programs and schools with which the official is associated. Also, for officials associated with schools, the title entered into SEVIS will print on all student Forms I-20.

Exchange Visitor Student Employment for College/University Students

Program sponsors that have been designated for the College/University Student category will be able to enter information into SEVIS concerning student employment for an exchange visitor in Active status who is being sponsored in one of the following College/University Student categories: Associate, Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate or Non-Degree. The RO/AROs will also be able to update a current segment of student employment and retrieve a list of all Active status EVs that have a current and/or future segment of student employment.

Exchange Visitor Email Address

Program sponsor officials will be able to enter an email address of an exchange visitor and/or dependent when creating and/or updating EV and dependent records. The email address will display on both the Exchange Visitor Information and/or Dependent Information screen.

User Manuals, Online Help, and Tutorials

The SEVIS Online Help and user manuals for school and program sponsor users will be updated as necessary to reflect the changes implemented into SEVIS Release 5.8.