

The SEVIS Program Office sent a memo to schools that clarifies their requirement to update initial and active student records to verify student "registration" in SEVIS. The following summary should assist in answering questions pertaining to this memo.

BACKGROUND:

The final SEVIS rule (pub. Dec 11, 2002) states that "each term or session and no later than 30 days after the deadline for registering for classes, schools are required to report the following registration information: Whether the student has enrolled at the school, dropped below a full course of study without prior authorization by the DSO, or failed to enroll;". As you are probably aware, this language has caused a great deal of confusion for schools. Schools have a variety of "registration deadlines", many of which are not captured directly in SEVIS. Additionally, a school may not know with certainty that a student will be enrolled FULL TIME for that semester until the end of their "drop/add" period. Because the end of drop add is often well into the semester, and the school believes that a student's registration in SEVIS must also be an indication that they are enrolled full time, many schools are treating the end of the "drop/add" period as their "registration deadline" for updating the "registration" information in SEVIS to comply with the regulation cited above.

In doing this, schools are creating a situation in which DHS does not have confirmation of a student's enrollment, or failure to enroll, until well beyond the start of the program. This is not acceptable in terms of meeting the national security goals of SEVIS. However, DHS also recognizes the fact that schools may not know that a student is full time until this late date.

MEMO INTENTIONS

The memo sent out to schools is intended to resolve the problem outlined above by clarifying three main points:

- 1) When is the 30 day deadline for reporting registration in SEVIS? A student's initial and continued participation in the academic or vocational program must be reported by the school within 30 days of the "Program Start Date" (for initial students) and "Next Session Start Date" (for continuing students).
- 2) How does the school report a student's enrollment or failure to enroll?
 - a. **If a student does report** to the school as expected, the DSO should update the "Registration" page, including the "current session end date", "next session start date" and "U.S. Address" if applicable. This is true for both initial and active students;

- b. **If an initial student fails to report** to the school, and that student is a transfer student or a student on the POE alert list (ie, has a POE record stating that they are coming to that school), the school should terminate the record for a reason of "No-Show";
 - c. **If a continuing student fails to report** to the school, the school should terminate the record for a reason of "Failure to Enroll".
- 3) What is initially being reported in the 30 day timeframe? A school is required **only to confirm whether or not the student reported to the school** as expected in this initial update.
- a. If the school does not know at the time that a student is going to take less than a full course of study, and finds out at a later date that the student dropped below without authorization, the school can terminate the student for dropping below a full course without authorization at that time;
 - b. This initial report also in no way precludes the school from authorizing the student to drop below a full course at a later date in the same term or session should that become necessary;
 - c. If the student maintains a full course, there is no additional update that the DSO needs to make to indicate that full time status, even if they were not sure that the student would be in full time status at the time that the registration page was updated.

EFFETIVE DATE

Many schools have been working on a different understanding of their reporting requirements, and may therefore not be prepared to register all students w/in 30 days of the program start date or next session start date at this time. For that reason, DHS has provided for some grace period if the effective date of this requirement. The memo establishes a November 15th deadline, before which schools will be granted leniency in this reporting requirement. After November 15th, DHS will begin expecting schools to adhere to the 30 day reporting requirement as outlined above. If a school does not have all students registered in a manner consistent with the direction above by that date, records may not be immediately terminated, but become in jeopardy of being terminated soon afterward. Therefore, schools needs to do everything that they can to assure that student records not already registered for this semester are updated as soon as possible.

If the school did not receive the memo, the Help Desk may e-mail them the PDF again. If the school wants more information on the details of this section of the regulations, please refer them to the Vol. 8 Code of Federal Regulations 214.3(g)(3)(iii)(A).