



U. S. Department of Homeland Security
Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement

HQSEV 20

425 I Street NW
Washington, DC 20536

October 31, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS THAT ADMIT FOREIGN STUDENTS

FROM: Jill Drury /s/
Director, Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)
U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

SUBJECT: Roles and Responsibilities after the transfer of the School Certification
Responsibility from USCIS to ICE on November 1, 2003

Effective November 1, 2003, the processing and adjudication of all School Certifications (Form I-17) will be centralized at the SEVP office in Washington, D.C. Consolidation of this process enables SEVP to establish a full-time, professional work-force that will be dedicated solely to accomplishing the school certifications as congressionally mandated.

The SEVP assumes responsibility for all school certification applications submitted after the 1st of November. Where a final decision has not been rendered on any case filed prior to November 1, and for which an on-site visit was completed prior to November 1, your local U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Office will retain jurisdiction over that case. Questions regarding the status of such cases should be directed to the local USCIS Office. However, in the case where the application is submitted prior to November 1 but the onsite review occurs after the 1st of November, responsibility for final decision will fall on the SEVP Office. In addition, all requested updates to school certification forms (I-17 updates) received by district offices prior to November 1, remain the responsibility of USCIS.

For questions regarding school certification applications submitted on or after November 1, please use the following procedures:

- Inquiries regarding certification applications on or after November 1 can be forwarded to the e-mail address at the appropriate SEVP Regional mailbox indicated below:

Eastern Region Schools	I-17 PROCEAST.SEVIS@DHS.gov
Central Region Schools	I-17PROCCENTRAL.SEVIS@DHS.gov
Western Region Schools	I-17PROCWEST.SEVIS@DHS.gov

- To verify which Region your school resides in, please refer to the SEVIS Website: www.ice.gov/sevis
- Questions about completion of a new or a “draft” Form I-17 school certification should be directed to the SEVIS help desk at 1-800-892-4829.

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- Student Reinstatements and Change of Status applications will continue to be adjudicated by USCIS. Student Reinstatement questions should be addressed to the local CIS Office. Employment authorization documents for Optional Practical Training and other student and exchange visitor related benefits will also continue to be adjudicated by USCIS and questions should be addressed to the appropriate Service Center:

Vermont Service Center	VSC.schools@dhs.gov
Nebraska Service Center	NSC.schools@dhs.gov
Texas Service Center	TSC.schools@dhs.gov
California Service Center	CSC.schools@dhs.gov

- For general contact information regarding the school certifications, please contact 1-202-305-2346 and follow the directions as indicated in the automated call system. As with any transitional process, we acknowledge the possibility of delays in implementing this new automated call system. The new automated call system should be fully operational shortly after November 3 and we ask that you please bear with us while it is being implemented.

The School Certification (Form I-17) Processing Branch of the SEVP office is headed by Ms. Joanne Jurmu and will be comprised of both permanently assigned federal employees and support contractors. The government employees will adjudicate each case on its own merit and make the final determination on certification of a school. The mailing address for the office is as follows:

Student and Exchange Visitor Program
Attn: I-17 Processing Branch
800 K Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20536

A number of schools have raised questions regarding SEVP school certification, recertification and withdrawal. A Standard Operating Procedures Manual is currently in development and will be released in the near future. In the interim, if you have questions or concerns that need immediate resolution, please contact the office using the above phone numbers.