Student and Exchange Visitor Program Office
SEVIS Technical Conference Call with the Educational Community
Questions and Answers from Wednesday, September 27, 2006

1. Forced log-outs and delays in SEVIS RTI

Members are reporting forced log-outs, odd data views (being able to see a deactivated and initial row for a transfer student) and delays while using SEVIS RTI in recent weeks. Is SEVP aware of system issues that are causing these disruptions and delays? Are there any planned changes or fixes to resolve these issues?

Response:

Yes, SEVP is aware of the forced log-outs, application errors, and delays while using SEVIS RTI. On Wednesday night, September 20, 2006, configuration changes were made to the servers used by SEVIS, which should have corrected these issues. The calls to the Help Desk regarding the issues appear to have ceased. If you continue to experience any of the issues listed above, please contact the Help Desk. Regarding the "odd data view" example cited, it is possible for a user at the transfer-in school to see a Deactivated status record as well as a second record for a transfer-in student. This would occur if the student's original transfer request is canceled by the transfer-out school prior to the transfer release date. When the transfer is canceled, the student Draft status record at the transfer-in school would be changed to Deactivated status. If a second transfer request is entered for the student, the transfer-in school would then see two records for this student, one of which would be in Deactivated status. If provided with SEVIS IDs for the specific students seen in the list, SEVP can provide further details on this situation.

2. Errors on list of Students in Initial Status with Port of Entry Records

Some members reported that incorrect students have appeared on their alert list entitled Initial Status with Port of Entry Records. For example, a student has a SEVIS record with school A, has a visa with school A listed on it, and has presented an I-20 at the POE issued by school A; the student's POE data, however, is listed on the alert list of school B. How can the POE data be transferred to the correct record?

Response:

If the information passed to SEVIS from ADIS matched the record at school B and only the record at school B, the POE data will be applied to that matching record. ADIS does not include SEVIS ID with the POE data, therefore, alternative matching criteria is used (i.e. name, document number, if available, date of birth, visa type).

3. SEVIS API code for Madras

The VisaPostCodeType table on page F-48 in Appendix F of the SEVIS API lists two visa post codes for Madras (now Chennai): MDR and MDS. Could SEVP clarify why this is?

Response:

The correct code is MDR. An SCR has been written to make this change in SEVIS, and a data fix will be implemented to correct the records with the incorrect codes.

4. Clarification on termination after change of status approval

Members would like clarification on how PDSOs/DSOs should handle records of students with approved change of status applications. According to an ICE handout provided at 2006 NAFSA Annual conference that is also posted on the ICE website, PDSOs/DSOs should not manually terminate a student or EV record if the student has properly changed to another nonimmigrant status; the handout instructs PDSOs/DSOs to request a data fix if the system does not properly terminate a record. This instruction conflicts with the guidance provided in previous calls, including the April 13, 2005 SEVIS Policy Conference Call, where SEVP said that DSOs could terminate a record for change of status approval. The termination of a record for "Change of status approved", however, continues to raise a flag with POE officials and Consular Officers.

Can SEVP provide clarification on: 1) How a record should be handled if a change of status approval has not resulted in a CLAIMS-based termination of the record; 2) How long is it taking CLAIMS to update these SEVIS records in general?

Response:

1) Change of status records should be handled as follows:

   A. *If the student has properly changed to another nonimmigrant status and the record in SEVIS indicates "approved," the DSO should email Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov to have the flag removed.*

   B. *If the student has properly changed to another nonimmigrant status and the record in SEVIS indicates "pending," the DSO should email SEVIShelpdesk@eds.com requesting a data fix to terminate the record for reason of COS approved and email Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov to have the flag removed.*

   C. *If the student has properly changed to another nonimmigrant status and there is no record of the COS in SEVIS (pending or approved), the DSO should manually terminate the record for reason of COS approved and email Toolbox.SEVIS@dhs.gov to have the flag removed.*

2) SEVIS receives CLAIMS data, which includes COS requests, once a day Monday-Friday. As for the COS adjudication turnaround by the service center, CIS should be able to provide more detail.

3) Regarding Auto Termination:

The auto-termination of these records is done by SEVIS, not CLAIMS. The reason it appears they are not all getting auto-terminated now is because we changed the auto-termination date to occur on the Benefit Start Date, rather than the date the COS was approved. Therefore, the records are still getting auto-terminated, just not as soon as the approval occurs.