

Post NAFSA Conference Questions

NOTE: Compliments were given to the SEVIS Help Desk personnel.

SAVE/DMV

1. How can a student extend his driver's license after his OPT is over, but during his grace period? Students would like to travel during the grace period.
2. A member asks if it is possible to know which 36 states are currently working with SEVP/DHS regarding DMV issues and/or REAL ID (referring back to the presentation and follow-up questions).

Response:

Please see the DMV Fact Sheet that accompanies this release.

Outreach

3. Why is the Tier 2 SEVIS Help Desk phone line connection so poor? We can often not hear the person at the other end, and several times have had to call back.

Response:

The Tier 2 SEVIS Help Desk team relocated to a new facility recently and is experiencing reception problems with the phone system. The SEVP Information Technology Management Branch team is working diligently with the phone company to resolve the problems. Also, the Help Desk team is using headsets, which could be defective and contributing to the situation. If you experience bad reception, please provide the name of the Help Desk tech assisting you. The individual's headset may need to be replaced.

Thank you for bringing this situation to our attention. As always, our goal is to provide the best.

4. We heard from SEVP that they are experiencing some financial challenges, and have had to delay some of the activities that the increase in SEVIS fee was intended to fund. Could SEVP provide an update on the development and implementation of the school liaison program?

Response:

We anticipate hiring the field liaisons during Fiscal Year 2010, which begins October 2009. This delay will allow the Liaison Branch leadership to get onboard and get organized before the hiring of the field liaisons. Details, such as when, where and how many liaisons will be hired, won't be released until the branch chief is hired. Anyone interested in the Liaison Program should become familiar with the government's hiring process. Individuals should prepare by going online to the www.USAJOB.gov Web site. The liaison positions will be posted in the coming year. Get ready!

Data Entry/Integrity

5. [This may not be the best question for SEVP, but it was raised several times during the session.] (NAFSA will share information with members regarding the data integrity Fact Sheet and sample I-94 card.) Incorrect information on I-94 cards can stem from incorrect data entry after the individual's arrival to confusion about the format for date of birth. Would SEVP be able to comment on, or influence, any possible changes to the I-94 card with respect to the format for the individual's date of

birth to match all other US government forms? Is SEVP aware of any changes planned to the means of data entry of the I-94 card information?

Response:

Please see the [Data Integrity Fact Sheet](#) that accompanies this release.

OPT

6. Some of our F-1s on OPT are concerned about visa delays and the 90 day unemployment rule. If a student has an offer of employment but cannot begin work due to a Security Advisory Opinion or other visa issuance delay, would that time be tolled, e.g. the clock would not run during the pendency of the visa issuance since it [is] a circumstance beyond the student's control?

Response:

As general policy, when a student does not have qualifying OPT employment, time spent outside of the United States counts toward the limit on authorized unemployment. However, visa issuance delays may be taken into account on a case-by-case basis in determining a student's continued eligibility for F-1 status.

7. Currently, SEVIS does not automatically extend F-1 status and OPT validity for students who have receipted H-1B petitions that are noted in the SEVIS record. Is SEVP working with USCIS to ensure the interface is working appropriately, or would SEVP consider adding a "receipted" button or link along with the "filed" or "waitlisted" drop-down menu options?

Response:

SEVP and USCIS continue to work together on all interfaces between agency systems. We have met with USCIS on a number of occasions to review the interface between CLAIMS and SEVIS related to the cap-gap extension. We realize SEVIS does automatically extend F-1 status and OPT for all students. We are working to improve the interface in order to avoid this issue in the future. SEVP is not considering adding a "receipted" button at this time but may explore that option in the future.

8. Are tutoring and teaching jobs in the individual's field of study sufficiently "related to study" for the purposes of OPT? For example: could a student who completed a Master's degree in Engineering tutor students in engineering subjects?

Response:

Tutoring positions, if related to the student's field of study, can be considered employment for the purpose of OPT if the student works more than 20 hours per week. In SEVIS, the DSO would indicate the student is self-employed. SEVP recommends a student maintain a log of hours worked in case questions arise regarding the employment.

F-3

9. When might we expect to see further guidance for the F-3 category?

Response:

Regulatory language on Border Commuter students is a priority for Fiscal Year 2010.