

To: All SEVIS Users
Date: May 27, 2010
Re: Recertification Overview
Number: 1005-08A

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) began recertification on May 26, 2010. This broadcast message provides general information, outlines the process and lists contact information for responses to all recertification questions.

Recertification Highlights:

- No fee for recertification
- Launched May 26, 2010
- 180 days to file a complete recertification package
- Recertification every two years
- Failing to file for recertification results in Automatic Withdrawal
- All correspondence must be faxed or e-mailed to the School Certification Branch

Regulation at 8 C.F.R 214.3(e), "Notices to Schools Related to Certification or Recertification Petitions or to Out-of-Cycle Review," outlines the recertification requirement. Specifically, it states that SEVP-certified schools must file for recertification every two years.

The recertification of SEVP-certified schools began May 26, 2010. School officials are notified via the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) 180 days prior to the school's Certification Expiration Date (CED) and receive various documents from the School Certification Branch via recert.sevis@dhs.gov.

SEVIS was modified in preparation for recertification and reflects the legend identified below. This legend is a placeholder for recertification alerts.

Name of School	Name of Campus	Location (City, State)	Role	Commands
Akridge University	Akridge University	Washington, DC	DSO	Search New Student Student Lists Reports
Woodward University @ Woodward University	Woodward University	Washington, DC	PDSO	Search New Student * Alerts Student Lists Reports

Upon notification, school officials must review current operations and ensure that the information contained within the Form I-17 accurately reflects those operations. If school officials need to update the Form I-17, the update must be submitted as soon as possible to ensure that the update is processed prior to the CED. If the school determines that an update is required, the school should also submit the “update pending” statement. The update pending statement notifies SEVP that a school is in the process of updating the Form I-17. SEVP will expedite the adjudication of the update pending statement.

SEVP-certified schools are divided into two categories: public and private accredited schools, and private unaccredited schools. Public and private accredited schools provide third-party organizations, including the Department of Education and accrediting bodies, with various school data. That data is collected and used in conjunction with the recertification process. Private unaccredited schools generally don’t have the same type of information. SEVP requests additional information from these schools during the recertification process.

SEVP utilizes the National Center for Education and Statistics (NCES) database to obtain information on the public and private accredited schools. The information housed within the NCES database is collected through eight surveys conducted throughout the year. The information is verified and vetted before posting. SEVP includes NCES information within the data sheet it provides schools for the following reasons:

1. NCES vets a school’s information and that data should correlate with the data contained within the school’s Form I-17. For example, the physical address provided on both documents should be the same. If the information it is not the same, the school must correct the address.
2. The school’s keyholder provides the input for the NCES surveys. If the information within the data sheet is incorrect, the designated school official notifies the school’s keyholder that a correction is needed.
3. The data sheet is more specific than the Form I-17; all the fields will not correlate. For example, the Form I-17 only asks for the degrees a school offers. The data sheet contains more specific information. It includes the degrees offered for each program of study. The data sheet is intended to assist school officials in future rounds of recertification. It can help verify programs of study and other pertinent school information.

Private unaccredited schools do not participate with the NCES. Additional information is needed from these schools during the recertification process. The information required may include letters in lieu of accreditation, financial statements, program and course information and other information.

The evidence required for recertification varies with each type of school. The notice of recertification provides detailed instructions. After the petitioning school submits the recertification package, the school receives a **Notice of Confirmation of Complete Filing**. The notice informs the school that SEVP received the Petition for

Recertification and that it will adjudicate the petition. If the submission is incorrect or incomplete, the school receives a **Notice of Rejection of Complete Filing**. This notice states the errors in the recertification package and requests that the school correct and resubmit the recertification package. The school will only have the remainder of the 180 days to resubmit a complete package.

Once the Recertification Petition Package is in adjudication, the school may receive a Request for Evidence (RFE). RFEs require a response within 15 days of the request. If no additional evidence is needed and the school continues to operate in accordance with the Federal Regulations governing SEVP, the school receives a **Notice of Recertification**. If the school fails to meet SEVP regulatory standards, it receives a **Notice of Denial**. If the school is denied Recertification, it may appeal the decision.

SEVP will post a Recertification Policy Guidance within the week. Review the material.

If you have recertification questions, send e-mail to recert.sevis@dhs.gov or call the School Certification Branch at 703-603-3591.