



## Mission

SEVP collects, maintains, analyzes and provides information so only legitimate foreign students or exchange visitors can gain entry into the United States, while protecting the nation's security. The result is an easily accessible information system that provides timely information to Department of State, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as a number of other federal law enforcement agencies who have a vested interest in F, M and J nonimmigrants.

This mission rests upon three pillars:

- **Protecting the Nation:** Our top priority is the safety of the United States and our citizens. We accomplish this by directly supporting ICE law enforcement activities and the work of numerous other agencies and task forces.

- **Public Diplomacy:** By living and learning in the United States, F and M students become our most important cultural ambassadors to creating intercultural relationships between the United States and citizens of other nations.
- **Economic Viability:** U.S. higher education is an engine for economic growth and one of our leading service sector exports.

These pillars allow the United States to attract the best and brightest F and M students to study and explore post-graduate opportunities in the United States, while protecting the security and safety of our citizens.

## Contact Us

SEVP offices are open Monday through Friday, 7a.m. to 5p.m. EST, except federal holidays.

Phone: 703-603-3400

Email: [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov)

The SEVIS Help Desk is open from 8a.m. to 8p.m. EST.

Phone: 800-892-4829

Email: [SEVIShelpdesk@hp.com](mailto:SEVIShelpdesk@hp.com)

Find SEVP on the web:

[www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis)

<http://StudyintheStates.dhs.gov>

Find SEVP and Study in the States on social media:

[Facebook.com/StudyintheStates](https://www.facebook.com/StudyintheStates)

[@StudyinStates](https://twitter.com/StudyinStates)



# Student and Exchange Visitor Program



Homeland  
Security



Photo Credit: Cornell University

## Schools

### School Certification

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program's (SEVP) School Certification Unit certifies schools to accept F (academic) and M (vocational) students. By certifying only bona-fide institutions and enforcing strict compliance standards, SEVP protects not only the students, but also national security.

To file for SEVP certification, school officials must complete Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," and pay the application fee. After a school becomes SEVP-certified, designated school officials (DSOs) can issue Forms I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," to prospective F or M students after they have been accepted for a program of study.

DSOs are responsible for continuously updating the school's information to make sure that SEVP is provided with the most up-to-date, accurate information.

### Recertification

DSOs, acting on behalf of SEVP-certified institutions, must complete recertification every two years to confirm compliance with SEVP eligibility, record keeping, and recording requirements on F and/or M students at the following types of schools:

- Universities;
- Colleges;
- Seminaries;
- Conservatories;
- Academic high schools;
- Elementary schools;
- Language schools;
- Vocational schools;
- Flight schools; and
- Other post-secondary institutions.

DSOs will receive notification, via the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), when they are within the 180 days of the school's certification expiration date (CED). The principal DSO will be responsible for submitting a complete recertification petition package

prior to the CED. SEVP's website ([www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis)) has detailed information on the recertification process. Failure to file for recertification will result in the automatic withdrawal of SEVP certification.

## SEVIS

SEVIS is the Web-based system that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) uses to maintain information on the following:

- SEVP-certified schools;
- Department of State-designated exchange visitor program sponsors;
- F, M and J nonimmigrants.

## Resources

SEVP has many ways to communicate with stakeholders to ensure that all questions and/or concerns are addressed. The following resources are available to F, M and J nonimmigrants and school officials:

### SEVP Response Center

The SEVP Response Center (SRC) is a help desk that is available to international students while they are studying in the United States. Although the SRC's goal is to answer questions during an initial call, if a response requires additional research the SRC will respond as quickly as possible.

Email: [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov)

Phone Number: 703-603-3400  
between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST, except holidays

### SEVIS Help Desk

A resource for school officials is the SEVIS Help Desk, which is available to provide system technical assistance. The SEVIS Help Desk assists users with any system-related issues, including various access issues, the reassigning of school officials, helping school officials modify student records and resetting passwords. The help desk can be reached by e-mail or by phone.

Email: [SEVIShelpdesk@hp.com](mailto:SEVIShelpdesk@hp.com)

Phone Number: 1-800-892-4829  
between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. EST

### Study in the States

Study in the States (<http://StudyintheStates.dhs.gov>) is part of a DHS initiative to enhance the nation's economic, scientific and technological competitiveness by finding new, innovative ways to encourage the "best and brightest" foreign students to study and explore post-graduate opportunities in the United States.

Study in the States brings together all of the government agencies that interact with F and M students. Study in the States provides timely news and updates via a blog; and amplifies its messages through Twitter and Facebook. The site provides information for various stakeholders, including school officials, and students, as well as government, academic and law enforcement partner agencies. All of these stakeholders work collectively to achieve our national security mission.

New policy guidance will be available on the Study in the States website as they are drafted. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide their input and concerns, and SEVP can then integrate this feedback and continue to give clear guidance to institutions. Your feedback is important to us and to the success of the international education mission. Be sure to monitor the site as well as Facebook ([www.Facebook.com/StudyintheStates](http://www.Facebook.com/StudyintheStates)) and Twitter ([@StudyinStates](https://twitter.com/StudyinStates)) for the latest updates.

### ICE.gov

For the official language on decisions and regulations, visit the SEVP page on the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) website, [www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis).

### Stakeholder Conferences

We welcome invitations to participate in stakeholder conferences and related events. Participation affords us valuable opportunities to meet our stakeholders in person; to present program information on policies, regulations and initiatives; and to address questions. SEVP participates in more than 60 stakeholder conferences, meetings and workshops each year.

Please contact the SRC at [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) or 703-603-3400 if you are interested in having SEVP participate in your event. We must receive requests at least six weeks prior to the event. Your request will be directed to the SEVP Conference Planning Team for action.

## Compliance

### SEVP Analysis and Operations Center

Established in 2011, the SEVP Analysis and Operations Center (SAOC) provides all SEVP stakeholders with a single interface for high-quality, timely analytical products, school compliance and student issue services. Specifically, the SAOC focuses on the types of efforts that:

- Pertain to school compliance, student status issues and support, incident response and emergency operations;
- Support SEVP analytical and data requirements; and
- Involve studies and analyses that inform policy, identify operational efficiencies, and determine systematic vulnerabilities and their mitigation.

### Policy

SEVP Policy develops and updates the federal regulations that govern F and M students and that relate to school certification. The primary regulations are 8 CFR 214.2(f) and (m) as well as 8 CFR 214.3 and 8 CFR 214.4. SEVP Policy also writes interpretive documents and policy guidance to help stakeholders better understand and apply the regulations. SEVP's Policy Team works on regulations and guidance that support both the DHS mission and the effective use of SEVIS.