

BA-PIER Meeting Notes

1) Welcome from host

- Manasi Devdhar-Mane, Menlo College, Director of International Student Admissions (and is the only contact for international programs at Menlo College)
- Parking permits on the table, restroom locations, food at the back of the room
- Short 15-minute tour after the meeting

2) Introductions from BA-PIER

- Ryan Hisamoto, BA-PIER Chair, Housekeeping
- Thank you to our host, Manasi
- Who is new?
 - Regina, California College of Communications
 - Savannah, College of San Mateo
 - Aurora, Cabrillo College
 - Anna, SF Art Institute
- Current BA-PIER team only has two more meetings before new leadership elections
- Two parts today, SEVP updates and networking/discussion

3) SEVP updates; Ron McPeak and Lambert Glory from Region

- **SEVP at a glance**
 - This presentation is almost the same as the one at NAFSA Region XII in Reno
 - Ron has 20 years of experience working with international students at Peralta Community College and International Christian Fellowship
 - Community colleges see everything to do with ISS, always interesting, we need more DSOs as there is a lot of turnover right now, there's no limit
 - SEVIS Help Desk won't talk to you unless you're a DSO or F-1 student
- **Latest News**
 - Eligibility Checks – DHS may enforce eligibility checks for DSOs and ROs, becoming stricter and more detailed in the adjudication process (e.g. fraud in L.A. with Korean-sounding named DSOs?).
 - Authorized Stay – DHS may consider a maximum period of authorized stay for F-1 students and other nonimmigrants.
 - Adjusting Program Fees – DHS will publish a final rule to adjust fees that SEVP charges to individuals and organizations; \$1250 for recertification, \$350 for I-901 (if approved in summer, may be implemented in fall, students are grandfathered in under the old fee); comes from funding deficit, fee increases will offset; will impact schools, campus are scrambling to consolidate their I-17s (e.g. DeVry).
 - Visit www.reginfo.gov to read the complete Fall 2018 Unified Agenda.
 - 8/9/18 Unlawful Presence Memo – changes USCIS calculation of unlawful presence of F/M/J students and scholars. Refer to ice.gov/SEVIS/Whats-New;

the new policy authorizes ICE to implement removal proceedings for overstays. Refer to USCIS for further guidance.

- **Notification and Follow-Up**

- Unemployment Calculation – SEVIS now calculates (but does not terminate) unemployment on post-completion OPT, as of 10/26/18; DSOs can't see the timer, but it's working; unemployment counter is visible in the expanded view of the SEVIS Employment Information page.
- SEVP Portal – students must enter their current SEVIS ID number from their current I-20; SEVP will lock the student's portal account after 3 failed attempts to enter their SEVIS ID number. DSOs have to reset student's portals if their accounts have been locked, which is cumbersome (DSOs DON'T have to reset student's password, students can do this on their own); check out www.studyinthestates.dhs.gov/SEVP-portal-help.
- No more Recertification Approval Notices are being sent out; you can see this in SEVIS now.
- Updates (PDSO/DSO changes) that need to be made with a locked I-17 can be emailed to FormI17SupportingEvidence@ice.dhs.gov. Other material changes can be emailed to SEVP@ice.dhs.gov. You must include all necessary evidence for the update in the email to SEVP. Updates still must be reported within 21 days of the change. Used to be a 10-day turnaround time for DSO changes, but it's taking longer now because of the increased scrutiny.
- New Evidence Guides and Checklists for certification, I-17 updates, and recertification, are available on www.ice.gov/SEVIS/Schools. You can even show your name on a website (e.g. <https://accic.org/> for community colleges)
- New call back function from SRC (Help Desk)
- New job opportunities

- **Don't Forget**

- Schools must verify DSOs within the verification period (12/2/18-3/2/19)
- I-515As are down in numbers, students must respond within 30 days, there are new infographics available on Study in the States website
- Maintaining Status – Lines of Communication: DSOs should communicate information about arriving in the U.S., full course of study, academic changes, travel plans, changes to personal information (e.g. address/financial support) within 10 days (update SEVIS within 21 days)
- Maintaining status with a full course of study (exceptions include academic difficulty, medical, final term); limits for online courses and distance learning (again, more awesome infographics available on Study in the States)

- **Facts + Figures**

- Natural Disasters, emergency planning is critical, there is a new SEVP toolkit

- **Helpful Resources**
 - Study in the States webinars www.studyinthestates.dhs.gov/resources
 - In Focus webinar coming up
 - SEVP Ask the Experts
 - Provide feedback on the survey
- **Pre-submitted Questions/FAQs**
 - Can a DSO also be a recruiter? Refer to 8CFR 214.3 (I) “A DSO or PDSO means a regularly employed member... whose compensation does not come from commission of recruitment of international students...” K-12 DSOs often travel to participate in education fairs abroad, but that is fine; they’re just promoting their school. If there’s no commission (or bonus), there’s no problem.
 - What is the mandate on turnaround times for I-17 updates now that the fees have increased the budget for USCIS? There are more adjudicators, who are assigned to either I-17 updates or recertification.
 - Can SEVP include DSOs in SEVP portal emails to students or send broadcast message with the message contents? Nope.
 - SEVIS – USCIS (claims interface) is having technical issues, transition for approvals take a while, please submit a correction request with a scan of the EAD to have SEVIS updated; USCIS ombudsmen wants specific examples from DSOs of these cases to present to USCIS and move the issue into resolution.
 - Can an international do BA-OPT, Certificate-OPT, MA-OPT, 2nd Certificate-OPT? You can’t do OPT for a certificate program, you can only do OPT after completion of a degree (AA/BA/MA/PHD); one school disagrees, offers a graduate certificate where students can get OPT (CSU East Bay), but doesn’t work for STEM OPT.
 - Does CPT affect OPT? Yes, if you reach 12 months of full-time CPT you are ineligible for OPT; students applying for H1-B are getting RFEs where USCIS is counting CPT and OPT as the same, and are exceeding 12 months, which is affecting their H1-B – unknown how widespread the issue is; you can have more than 12 months of part-time CPT and it will not affect OPT eligibility.
 - Procedure for adding an additional academic program? I-17 update petition, need hours, term dates, admission requirements, etc.
 - When is the educational level “Other” on the I-20 appropriate to use? Would it be appropriate for a community college to use it for students planning to transfer to a four-year university without completing an associate degree? Yes on question 2. You must update the SEVIS record if and then the student changes their mind. Question 1 – it depends; when the student isn’t going to earn a specific degree.

- When is it appropriate to process a Change of Level if a school does not offer language training or more than one type of degree?

4) Table Discussions

- NAFSA Highlights
- Pre-submitted topics:
 - Joining international student and study abroad program services in one office
 - Tips on how to get entry-level positions in international education
 - Tips for networking with other professionals in multiple ways