SEVIS Release 6.17 Final System Changes

July 31, 2014
Production Release Date: August 1, 2014

The following summarizes the final system changes to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) with Release 6.17.

All Users

Updates to SEVIS Password Requirements

For this release the password requirements will be updated to include the following changes:
- Users may not re-use the previous eight passwords (previously users could not re-use the previous six passwords)
- Passwords may not contain a dictionary word or proper noun

SEVIS Name Standardization Impact Report

In 2015, Student and Exchange Visitor Program and Department of State will standardize the way nonimmigrant names are entered and stored in SEVIS. As a part of that standardization, existing nonimmigrant names will be changed to conform to new standards, which include elimination of special characters. The standardization **will not be implemented with this release**. This release has the SEVIS Name Standardization Impact Report. It shows school/sponsor officials the names of any active and initial nonimmigrants whose name will change as a result of standardization. The report will only display 35 data entries (names) on the screen. To see more than the displayed 35 names, the report must be downloaded. The report can be downloaded in two file formats: csv (Comma Separated Values) or Excel (Microsoft Excel workbook).

School officials will be able to locate the SEVIS Name Standardization Impact Report on the Student Lists screen and sponsor officials will be able to locate this report on the Exchange Visitors and Dependents Menu screen.

For more information on the SEVIS Names Report, visit the Study in the States website to view the SEVIS Names Report F/M and J job aids: http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/sevis

F/M School Officials

Date of Last Event added to the Student and Dependent Information pages

The Date of Last Event data will be added to the Student and Dependent Information pages to indicate how current the data is. On the Student Information page the student's Date of Last Event data will be displayed within the Program Information section below the student's Status. The Student Information page will also display the dependent's Date of Last Event data in the Dependent's section at the bottom of the page. In addition, the Dependent Information page will also display the dependents Date of Last Event below the dependent's Status.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Dates and Status Indicator

A school official will see the OPT Status Indicator as highlighted text on the Student Information page if the student has an active OPT authorization. Below is a high level summary of the OPT Status Indicator text:

- **Active Pre-Completion OPT** - the student is working while studying towards a degree

- **Active Post-Completion OPT** - the student is working under regular OPT after the program end date in SEVIS
- **Active STEM OPT** - the student is working for an E-Verify employer following an approved STEM extension of post-completion OPT
- **Active Cap Gap OPT** - the student's OPT was extended because an employer filed a qualifying H-1B petition with USCIS

On the student's OPT Employment page the OPT Status Indicator will be represented as a dark dot under the ACTIVE column heading. The OPT Status Indicator will be displayed only between the Actual OPT Start Date and the Actual OPT End Date.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) Dates

Release 6.17 includes the addition of two new sets of dates related to OPT, as well as a modification of the title of the current set of dates. When a school official selects the Students With Requested, Pending, or Approved Optional Practical Training (OPT) list, they will have the ability to view these new data elements for a student's OPT request dates. The Employment Start Date column header name will be updated to DSO Recommended Start Date and the Employment End Date column header name will be updated to DSO Recommended End Date. In addition, the following column headers will be added after the DSO Recommended End Date column header: USCIS Approved Start Date, USCIS Approved End Date, and OPT Type. Below is a high level summary of the OPT columns:

OPT DATE FIELDS		CAPTURES	EXAMPLE
DSO Recommended	OPT Start Date	The date the student wants OPT work authorization to begin, as entered by the P/DSO in SEVIS.	Bob will finish his academic program on May 25, 2014. On April 30, 2014, Bob requests OPT authorization of June 1, 2014 to May 31, 2015. His P/DSO processes the request. In SEVIS: **DSO Recommended OPT Start: 06/01/2014** **DSO Recommended OPT End: 05/31/2015**
	OPT End Date	The date the student wants OPT work authorization to end, as entered by the P/DSO in SEVIS.	
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) - Approved	OPT Start Date	The first date the student can legally work, as approved by USCIS. SEVIS receives this date from USCIS via interface.	USCIS receives the OPT application in mid-May 2014. By the time it is processed, it is June 20, 2014. They authorize OPT from June 20, 2014 through June 19, 2015 and issue the Employment Authorization Document (EAD). In SEVIS: **USCIS Approved Start: 06/20/2014** **USCIS Approved End: 06/19/2015**
	OPT End Date	The last date the student can legally work, as approved by USCIS. SEVIS receives this date from USCIS via interface.	
Actual	OPT Start Date	The first date the student can legally work. By default it is the same as the USCIS-approved OPT Start Date. SEVIS receives this date from USCIS via interface.	SEVIS automatically populates the Actual OPT dates with the dates received from USCIS. In October 2014, Bob is accepted into a new academic program, which he wants to begin in January 2015. He contacts the DSO at his current school to coordinate the transfer of the SEVIS Record. They agree on a Transfer Release date of December 30, 2014. The P/DSO processes the transfer. On December 30, 2014, the SEVIS record is transferred to the new school and Bob's employment authorization ends. SEVIS changes
	OPT End Date	The last date the student can legally work. By default it is the same as the USCIS-approved OPT End Date, but is modified by SEVIS as follows: • Shortened to the Transfer Release date, if	

OPT DATE FIELDS		CAPTURES	EXAMPLE
		the student transfers to another school before end of authorized OPT. • Shortened to Registration date, if the student changes educational level before end of authorized OPT. • Shortened to Termination date, if record is terminated before end of authorized OPT. • Lengthened if the student is eligible for Cap Gap extension of OPT.	the Actual OPT End date to December 30, 2014. In SEVIS: **Actual Start: 06/20/2014** **Actual End: 12/30/2014**

Editing the U.S. Address for Active Students

School officials will see a slight modification to the functionality for a student's U.S. address from the Student Information page. To modify the student's U.S address, the school official should click on the Personal Information link located on the Student Information page. Once the Update Personal Information page appears, item 9, U.S. Address, will have a new "Edit Address" link. Clicking this link will open the Edit Address modal to submit updates. This is a first step towards address validation but the modal will not validate U.S. addresses in this release of SEVIS.

J Sponsor Officials

Columns Added to the Exchange Visitor (EV) Search Results

The Date of Birth, Category, and Date of Last Event columns will replace the Date of Last Update and Date of Last Status columns on the Exchange Visitor Search Results screen. The Program Start Date column header name will be updated to Program Begin and the Program End Date column header will be updated to Program End. The Date of Birth column will be displayed after the First Name column, the Category column will be displayed after the Status column, and the Date of Last Event column will be displayed after the Program End column.

Search results will also be sortable by the Date of Last Event and Date of Birth columns in either ascending or descending order. The sponsor official will no longer be able to sort the search results by Date of Last Status Change, Date of Last Update, Program Name, or Program Number. If a program is designated for more than one category, all approved program categories will display. However, if the program is approved for only one category, the category will not display. In addition, the Category column will be blank for all dependent records.

Exchange Visitors Requiring Validation

A new alert will be created called 'Exchange Visitors Requiring Validation', to replace the following alerts: Exchange Visitors 15 Days Beyond Program Start Date, Exchange Visitors 15 Days Beyond Effective Date of Transfer, Exchange Visitors 25 Days Beyond Effective Date of Transfer and Exchange Visitors 15 Days Beyond Program Start Date with an Approved Change of Status. The alert will display under the EV Lists when EVs are either in Initial status and are 15 days beyond the Program Begin Date, in Initial status and are 15 days beyond their Benefit Start Date, and in Transferred status 15 days beyond the Effective Date of Transfer.

Once the program official selects the 'Exchange Visitors Requiring Validation' alert, the following columns will display: SEVIS ID, Family Name, First Name, Date of Birth, Category, Status, Reason, Validation Required By Date. The Reason column will display the reason why the EV requires validation and the following values will be displayed: Initial, Transfer, Approved Change of Status, Pending Change of Status. However, if an EV's record meets multiples reasons for validation, the most important reason will display. The following is the list of hierarchy in order from highest to lowest reason for validation.

An EV will appear on the 'Exchange Visitors Requiring Validation' list with the following Reason code:

Reason Code	Explanation of why an EV will display on the 'Exchange Visitors Requiring Validation' list
Initial	if the exchange visitor is in Initial status and the current date is 15 days beyond their Program Begin Date
Transfer	if the exchange visitor is in Transferred status 15 days beyond the Effective Date of Transfer. They will display at the transfer-in program
Pending Change of Status	if the exchange visitor is in Initial status and a pending change of status has been received and it is 15 days beyond the Program Begin Date
Approved Change of Status	if the exchange visitor is in Initial status and a change of status has been approved and it is 15 days beyond the Benefit Start Date

Form DS-2019 Title Update

The title on the form DS-2019 will be updated to reflect that the form can be used for both exchange visitors and their spouse or dependents. The title to form DS-2019 will be updated to 'CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXCHANGE VISITORS (J VISA) STATUS'.

Forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 Updates

The form expiration dates for the forms DS-3036 and DS-3037 have been updated to reflect the new expiration date of March 31, 2017. In addition, the DS-3036 physical mailing address for the Office of Designation has been updated and the physical address for the U.S. Department of State has been updated on the DS-3037.

EV Addresses

The Current U.S. Address field for an EV will be renamed Physical Address, to correctly reflect the address type for an EV. In addition, a new optional field called Mailing Address will be added to document the mailing location of an EV. These fields will be displayed under Contact Information on the Exchange Visitor Information page.

To add or edit the EV's Physical and Mailing addresses two new address modals will be provided. The program official should click on the 'Add Address' link to bring up the address modal where the address can be entered. The modals will be available on New Exchange Visitor and the Biographical Information pages.

User Manuals, Online Help, and Tutorials

SEVIS Online Help and User Manuals for school and program sponsor officials will be updated as necessary to reflect the changes implemented with SEVIS Release 6.17.