



International Student Interagency Webinar for Community Colleges

Dec. 7, 2016

Webinar Script

Opening Remarks

- Thank everyone for attending the webinar.
- There is a comment box for participants to ask questions. We will answer submitted questions at the end of the presentation.
- Now a few words from Mary Heiss from the American Association of Community Colleges who will provide opening remarks.
- My name is Mary Heiss, and I serve as Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).
- On behalf of AACC, I am very happy to be here today and to see this type of collaboration taking place with community colleges.
- As some of you may know, AACC's President and CEO serves on the Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council, an advisory committee managed by one of our co-hosts, the DHS Office of Academic Engagement.
- I am very fortunate to be joined by the senior officials from the departments of State, Commerce and Homeland Security.



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- Our panelists will walk you through the roles of the various interagency partners in the international student immigration process as well as resources available to institutions.
 - Following their presentations, we will have about 15 minutes for open discussion and we welcome any questions you may have.
 - You can send questions through the chat box located at the bottom right hand corner.
 - With that, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Frazier.
 - Thank you Ms. Heiss, now we will hear from U.S. Commercial Service.

Slides 2-6

Commercial Services

- I am Amy Freedman with the U.S. Commercial Service. We have a global network of 100 offices located throughout the U.S. and over 100 offices located in more than 70 countries. Our worldwide team of education specialists is here to assist with your international outreach to students, potential partners, and agents. We cover all levels of educational institutions
- Our Education Team members can assist you with the following:
 - International market intelligence, we work with partners like EducationUSA and other resources
 - Recruitment Fairs – we can help you identify the right international education fairs for your institution.
 - Webinars – learn about the education sector in a market of interest without leaving your desk.



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- Virtual Education Events – showcase your school to a potential partner institution and/or agents using a PowerPoint presentation live over the internet.
 - A great resource is our Virtual Education Fairs (VEF) in countries around the world since there is no travel cost. Each VEF is limited to six appropriate institutions. The most reputable and best performing agents from targeted markets will visit the U.S. Consulates or Embassies in each country listed to listen and watch the presentations of the schools participating in the fairs.
 - Using web conferencing technology, your school will be able to conduct a 10-minute presentation via PowerPoint to an audience of no less than 10 of the top agents during the fair. The cost is between 600 and 700 dollars.
 - Additionally, we also work closely with other agencies to provide additional resources.

Slides 7-12

EducationUSA

- EducationUSA is the U.S. Department of State’s global network of international student advising centers.
- We provide support and services to prospective international students seeking to study in the U.S. and to accredited American colleges/universities seeking to engage international student audiences.
- We also work with foreign educational institutions and governments to promote student mobility between the U.S. and their countries



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- The emphasis is on helping students and institutions develop the tools/knowledge to make informed decisions about their own “best fit” – where students are best positioned for success and/or what student populations can enrich campus/local communities through international engagement.
 - EducationUSA Operates over 400 centers in 177 countries across the globe
 - Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) provide training and oversight to our network in multi-country portfolios – They are experts in U.S. and foreign higher education systems and are excellent resources for U.S. institutions seeking to develop strategies for international student recruitment/retention and campus internationalization
 - 550 advisers staff advising centers where they provide guidance and support to U.S. institutions and local international students – We facilitate meaningful engagement between students and institutions.
 - Wide array of in-person and online activities to support international student mobility.
 - Expert In-Country Support: Overseas international student recruitment fairs/tours, in-center presentations for prospective students, local high school/college engagement
 - Online Engagement: webinars, virtual recruitment fairs, newsletters, social media, website
 - Special programs targeting specific audiences and showcasing U.S. higher education (international high school students, academically elite but low income students, foreign government/campus administrators, etc.) - Contact EducationUSA for more information about how your institution can get involved.
 - Conferences: Join us for conferences in the U.S. and abroad – EducationUSA Forum in DC and Regional Forums overseas
 - Website login access is free! www.educationusa.state.gov
 - Contact Program Officers in DC and/or REACs in the field for more information (REAC contact information is online w/ free higher education representative login)



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- The Annual Open Doors Report which is funded by ECA and executed by IIE was released November 2016
 - Global statistics for 2015/2016 include 1,043,839 international students studied in the United States
 - The Top 4 Countries sending international students are China (328,547), India (165,918), Saudi Arabia (61,287) and South Korea (61,007). These countries make up 60% of all international Students
 - The countries with the fastest growth are India (+24.9%), Nepal (+18.4%), Vietnam (+14.3%)
 - International students contributed \$35.8 billion to the U.S. economy
 - In terms of community colleges there were 78,297 international students at Community Colleges
 - 46% of all undergrads attend Community Colleges, approximately 1.5% are international (5.2% across all institutional types, room for growth)

Slides 13-20

Department of State

- To begin I want to discuss what a student visa is. An issued visa is a sticker that is placed inside an international student's passport it includes a picture, their name, date and place of birth as well as the type of visa.
- A visa does not guarantee entry into the United States. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials at the port-of-entry have authority to permit or deny admission to the United States. If you are allowed to enter the United States, the CBP official will provide an admission stamp or paper Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record.



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- If admitted students are granted duration of status which refers to the period a student is pursuing a full course of study, plus any authorized practical training following completion.
 - Next we will give an overview of the student visa interview. During your visa interview, a consular officer will determine whether an individual is qualified to receive a visa, and if so, which visa category is appropriate based on purpose of travel. Individuals will need to establish that they meet the requirements under U.S. law to receive the category of visa for which you are applying.
 - There are four things the consular officer is looking for: who you are, what you want to do, how you're going to do it and what you intend to do when you complete your approved activity. Things they may discuss include what they plan to study and why, background on their home country and how they plan to pay for their study. Students also need to show how they will pay for their education.
 - There is a list of required documents students should bring to the interview on travel.state.gov that includes: passport valid for travel to the United States, Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160 confirmation page, application fee payment receipt, photo and certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status-For Academic and Language Students, Form I-20 or Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status for Vocational Students, Form I-20.
 - Most student visas are issued 72% of F-1 and M-1 were issued in FY16. If students are refused under 214(B) they can reapply.
 - There are many reasons a visa applicant could be found ineligible for a visa. These reasons, called ineligibilities, are listed in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and other immigration laws. The most common refusal is under section 214(B). Some types of ineligibility can be overcome in certain immigrant visa cases, other ineligibilities are permanent.
 - Some examples of visa ineligibilities are the visa applicant:



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- Did not fully complete the visa application and/or provide all required supporting documentation - INA section 221(g)
 - Did not establish eligibility for the visa category being applied for or overcome the presumption of being an intending immigrant - INA section 214(b)
 - Was convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude - INA section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(I)
 - Was convicted of a drug violation - INA section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(II)
 - Please remember officers can only discuss cases with the individual themselves.
 - “Administrative Processing” is the term we use to encompass any further review of a case beyond the interview. It may include confirmation of the petition, clarification of legalities, or any number of other questions a consular officer must resolve before a visa can be issued.
 - Administrative processing is unique to the circumstances of each application. Applicants receive specific instructions on what to do/expect.
 - The top 10 countries for visa issuance are: China, India, South Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan and Germany.

Slides 21-29

SEVP

- This section covers:
 - Facts & figures
 - Latest trends



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- Recent guidance
 - Notifications and follow-up
 - Resources

Facts & Figures

- This slide shows current F-1 and M-1 student data drawn from the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)
- There are approximately 465 community colleges nationwide that enroll international students
- Data currently shows at least 42,000 international students enrolled in community colleges across the country

Final Policy Guidance Update

- SEVP released final guidance S7.2: Pathway Programs for Reasons of English Proficiency on Oct. 28, 2016
 - Specifically focuses on English language training components for pathway programs

Overview

- Comprises the third part of a policy guidance series on pathway programs, conditional admission and English proficiency on the Form I-20
 - SEVP released final policy guidance on conditional admission and the Form I-20 English proficiency field in July 2016
- Defines a pathway program



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- “Postsecondary program of study combining credit-bearing and developmental ESL coursework to prepare a student who is unable to meet English proficiency standards for admission”

Fact sheet

- In addition to the policy guidance, SEVP released an accompanying fact sheet that explains:
 - How to properly input pathway program information into the Form I-17
 - How to properly issue Forms I-20 for pathway programs

Next steps for DSOs

- Ensure the Form I-17 reflects the school’s current operations and programs
- Submit a Form I-17 update to add a pathway program, if needed
- Schools that already have an SEVP-certified pathway/bridge program must comply with policy guidance standards within one year of the effective date, by Oct. 28, 2017
 - Guidance applies as of the effective date for all pathway programs started or added on or after that date
- Stakeholders can **read the final policy guidance** in the Operating Instructions section at [ICE.gov/SEVP](https://ice.dhs.gov/SEVP)

SEVP Final Policy Guidance S13.1

- Permissible as an admissions or academic practice
- A school may conditionally admit a student into a program of study
- Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status” can only be issued once the student meets standards for admission



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- A school may conditionally admit a student into a bachelor's program and require that the student take one semester of ESL classes prior to beginning in the bachelor's program. The Form I-20 cannot be issued for the bachelor's program but must be issued for the ESL program if the student meets all standards for admission for the ESL program

SEVP Final Policy Guidance S13.2

- Emphasizes accountability for English proficiency as a standard of admission
 - If a school requires English proficiency for admission, the Form I-20 can only be issued after meeting standards for English proficiency
 - English proficiency must be met prior to issuing a Form I-20
 - If a Form I-20 is issued incorrectly, the school should correct it as soon as possible
- View the final guidance on Study in the States
- Visit StudyintheStates.gov/sevp-guidance-for-comment to sign up for notifications when new policy guidance is posted

DSO Requirements

- Must be a regularly employed member of the school administration
- Cannot receive commission for recruiting students internationally
- Cannot have primary obligation of recruiting international students for compensation
- Must have an office at the school
- Must be a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident



DSO Best Practices

- Submit PDSO and DSO updates in SEVIS separate from other updates, if possible
- Refer to SEVP Fact Sheet 1506-08: Designated School Official Submissions for detailed information related to the process and required documents
- There can be only one PDSO per instructional site, with no limit on the number of DSOs
- The PDSO and DSOs may not delegate responsibilities to others that are not PDSOs or DSOs

SEVP Contact Information

- Contact the SRC:
 - By phone:
 - 703-603-3400
 - 800-892-4829
 - By email:
 - For case-specific questions, email SEVP@ice.dhs.gov
 - For SEVIS technical issues, email SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov
 - The SRC changed its hours of operation to Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except holidays
 - Closed every Wednesday from 12:50 to 1:20 p.m. ET for system maintenance and testing
- DSOs can also contact your local field representative for questions about SEVP policies, processes and updates



Slides 30-38

USCIS

- Thanks Trent!
- It is a great pleasure for USCIS to be here, so I want to thank the Office of Academic Engagement for providing this forum to ensure dialogue.
- I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some USCIS' resources that might be useful to DSOs and leadership at Community Colleges. In particular, I would like to highlight some of the resources that we have available in our website.
- I'm sure many of you are familiar with it, but just in case. It is www.uscis.gov
- Here you will be able to find information that has been specifically designed for students and topics of relevance to this audience. For instance, the students and employment page or the exchange visitors page, as well as guidance about the optional practical training options.
- On the next slide, I would like to introduce you to our newest tool "Emma." She is our USCIS virtual assistant. Emma can help customers navigate our website and provide immediate answers to questions about our services. You will be able to find her on the upper right corner of our website and she will provide information based on the search terms that you ask her. So, if you type students, she will be able to display the different pages that are related to students.
- Here I want to mention that Emma is now available in English and Spanish; and she is accessible on all devices, even your mobile phone. Emma "speaks" like an average person, and the more she is used, the smarter she gets.



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- We are constantly adding content and updating existing responses to improve the user experience, correct web links or typos, and to make the answers as simple as possible. Her accuracy rate is 90 percent in English and 87 percent in Spanish.
 - Moving on, I would like to share with you the customer service tools that are available in our website. Because empowering our customers through innovative access to information is a top priority for USCIS, so I want to make sure that you can contact us any time.
 - As you can see, customers can check their case status online. This option is available 24/7 and it is very attractive for those who prefer to use the convenience of internet, rather than placing a call.
 - Also, customers can submit an online request to USCIS about a case any time by visiting www.uscis.gov/tools and clicking on “Submit an online request about your case.”
 - Moreover, customers can find their nearest office in the U.S. or internationally.
 - Likewise, customers can sign up to receive automatic emails with updates about their case.
 - Another tool is the change of address online. I would like to take this opportunity to remind the audience that international students are required to notify USCIS about their change of address, if they move. This helps us to ensure that customers receive timely information and documents at the right address. If you complete the online address change, this will also update your address on any pending or recently approved applications.
 - And lastly, we enhanced infoPASS (the appointment scheduler) at USCIS.
 - It was launched June 27th with an improved interface for mobile devices and it is offered in 12 languages. This tool uses zip codes to locate the nearest office where you can set up the appointment and it now allows customers to make appointments in overseas offices.
 - On the next slide, I would like to mention some additional options to contact USCIS.



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- The first one is our National Customer Service Center (NCSC). You can reach us at 1.800.375.5283. We provide assistance in English and Spanish.
 - Also, I want to share with you the email address to our Public Engagement mailbox. This is public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov. Here we can answer questions from the public (as long as they are not case specific) to protect the personal information from our customers. Our team monitors this account, so this is another option for you to receive answers to your questions.
 - Finally, I would like to say that at USCIS, we are committed to serving our wide and diverse customer base. So we are proud of the partnerships that we have with SEVP/ICE, State Department, and the Office of Academic Engagement to ensure that our international students can access the information and services they need to succeed. Thank you!