



## **Spring 2019 SEVP InFocus Webinar Glossary**

May 9, 2019

**Designated school official (DSO):** a regularly-employed member of the school administration designated by the head of a SEVP-certified school to provide recommendations to F and/or M students enrolled at the school regarding maintenance of nonimmigrant status, and to support timely and complete record keeping and reporting to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student:”** the form for a petition submitted and maintained by school officials electronically in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System for the SEVP certification of the school to enroll F and/or M students.

**Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status:”** the form issued to an F or M nonimmigrant to be used as authorization for admission in and maintenance of nonimmigrant status for the duration of their visit in the United States.

**Form I-539, “Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status:”** The form F and M nonimmigrants use to apply for reinstatement; and that certain nonimmigrants use to extend their stay or change to another nonimmigrant status.

**Form I-94, “Arrival/Departure Record:”** The Arrival and Departure Record is the Form I-94, in either paper or electronic format, issued by a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer to foreign visitors entering the United States. After April 30, 2013, most arrival and/or departure records are created electronically upon arrival. Instead of a paper form, the visitor will be provided with an annotated stamp in the foreign passport. If provided a paper form, the admitting CBP officer generally attaches the Form I-94 to the visitor's passport and stamps the departure date on the form.

**Form I-983, “Training Plan for STEM OPT Students:”** A formal training plan that clearly articulates the science, technology, engineering and mathematics optional practical training student’s learning objectives and affirms the employer’s commitment to helping the student achieve those objectives.

**Homeland Security Investigations (HSI):** Part of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Homeland Security Investigations directorate uses its legal authority to investigate issues such as immigration crime, human rights violations and human smuggling; smuggling of



narcotics, weapons and other types of contraband; and financial crimes, cybercrime and export enforcement issues.

**I-901 SEVIS Fee:** A fee all F and M students and most J-1 exchange visitors must pay prior to gaining F, M, or J status to support the administrative expenses of SEVP, and the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.

**Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):** a U.S. Department of Homeland Security agency that promotes homeland security and public safety through the criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws governing border control, customs, trade and immigration. Through SEVP, ICE helps secure the foreign student visa system.

**Kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12):** education levels students enroll in before advancing to higher education institutions. U.S. students usually begin a formal educational program around age five or six in kindergarten. Children then complete grade levels one through 12 before attending college or university. F and M students may enroll in a private program for any length of time but may only attend a public high school for one year.

**Optional practical training (OPT):** training that is not an integral part of the established curriculum. OPT does not fulfill requirements of an F-1 student's program of study and successful program completion is not contingent on participation in OPT. OPT may include:

- Pre-completion OPT
- Post-completion OPT
- 24-month extension of post-completion STEM OPT
- H-1B cap gap

**Principal designated school official (PDSO):** a designated school official (DSO) with added responsibilities to:

- Serve as the primary point of contact with SEVP on any issues that relate to school bona fides or compliance with regulations.
- Administer the F/M program at the school, keeping the school information in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) up-to-date, manage DSOs, oversee the management of student records and respond to SEVIS-generated alerts.
- Submit school certification and recertification packages.

**Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM):** science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs, which are important to innovation and job creation in the United States.



**SEVP Response Center (SRC):** the primary contact at SEVP for nonimmigrant students, academic institutions, government users of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), and the general public requesting guidance, data corrections and information on how to use SEVIS.

**Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS):** an internet-based application that facilitates timely electronic reporting and monitoring of international students and exchange visitors, as well as their dependents, in the United States. This application enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of State throughout a student's or exchange visitor's program in the United States.

**Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP):** a part of the National Security Investigations Division and acts as a bridge for government organizations that have an interest in information on nonimmigrants whose primary reason for coming to the United States is to be students. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, SEVP manages schools, nonimmigrant students in the F and M visa classifications and their dependents.

**Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL):** is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities.

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):** an agency within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that authorizes benefits for students and exchange visitors. Students can request benefits such as employment, an extension of their stay or a change of status from USCIS.

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP):** a U.S. Department of Homeland Security agency that secures the borders of the United States, including airports, land borders and seaports. When entering the country, F and M students go through inspections with CBP officers and must present proper documentation.

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS):** a federal agency whose missions include preventing terrorism and enhancing security, managing U.S. borders, administering immigration laws, securing cyberspace and ensuring disaster resilience. Through ICE and SEVP, DHS secures the student visa system.

**U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO):** an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO examines how taxpayer dollars



are spent and provides Congress and federal agencies with objective, reliable information to help the government save money and work more efficiently.