



Batch Webinar FAQs (March 4, 2016)

March 16, 2016 – Initial release of FAQs

Batch Technology 1

Program Start Date versus Initial Session Start Date 1

Phone Numbers and Email Addresses 2

Auto-Terminations 3

 Registration 3

 Unemployment 3

Alert and Student Lists 3

Miscellaneous 4

Batch Technology

Q: When will the schema XSD files be available for the upcoming releases?

A: We have released the schema for both releases. If you need the files, please contact us at SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov and we will send you copies. The schema files and the application programming interface (API) for the Alpha release were available on March 11, 2016.

Note: We mark these files “Draft,” but we change them only to correct a bug or problem found during testing. The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) will publish the final schema files and the API on the day of release.

Q: We do not see our batch provider on the list of attendees at the Batch Meeting that SEVP holds with developers and vendors. Do you communicate with them through a subcontractor?

A: Some vendors who were invited to the meeting did not attend. If you want to pass the information along to your vendor, you may do that and recommend that they join the weekly SEVP Batch User Conference Call. The vendor should contact us through SEVISTechnicalfeedback@ice.dhs.gov.

Program Start Date versus Initial Session Start Date

Q: What is the difference between the Program Start Date and the Initial Session Start Date?

A: The Program Start Date is the date by which the student must report to the school. The Initial Session Start Date is the date that the actual academic session or term begins.

Q: Why did you create the Initial Session Start Date field?



A: According to regulations, the designated school official (DSO) may select a reporting date before the start of classes to accommodate various earlier campus activities; for example, orientation, special research, etc. This date may be up to 30 days before classes start. SEVP has been using the Program Start Date as that deadline, which limits the school to 30 days to report registration. Adding the Initial Session Start Date, allows DSOs more time to complete registration accurately, if their schools hold a required orientation much earlier than the actual start of classes. It also allows schools to grant students more time to find housing and adjust before the start of classes, if necessary.

Q: Do we enter the Initial Session Start Date when we create the certificate of eligibility (COE) or when we register the record?

A: DSOs enter the Initial Session Start Date when creating the COE. Just as with the Program Start and End Dates, the DSO can also edit the Initial Session Start Date before the student arrives.

Q: If our Program Start and Initial Session Start Dates are the same, do we have to enter both?

A: Yes, you must enter dates in both fields.

Q: Are two registration events required now—one to note the student has arrived and a second for enrollment?

A: No, register the students when they arrive. If a student does not enroll in a full course load, either authorize a reduced course load or terminate the student for failure to enroll, whichever is appropriate.

Q: Are there any negative implications for a current record without an Initial Session Start Date?

A: No, if you have already issued a Form I-20 without an Initial Session Start Date, SEVIS will populate that field with the Program Start Date. It can be missing from the printed Form I-20.

Phone Numbers and Email Addresses

Q: Are both U.S. and foreign telephone numbers required at the time of registration?

A: No, F-1 and M-1 students only need one of the three following things at the time of continuing registration:

- U.S. telephone number
- International telephone number
- Student must have told you that he/she does not have a telephone

Q: Is a foreign and/or U.S. telephone number required for a J-1 Exchange Visitor at the time of validation?

A: The J-1 exchange visitor (EV) must have a United States-based telephone number. The U.S. Department of State has required this since June 2015. The pending draft FAQ for



Subpart A allows the use of the site of activity telephone number, if the EV does not have a United States-based telephone number.

Q: Do school officials need to enter email addresses and telephone numbers for active records that are missing this information?

A: Yes, this information will be required for all continuing students. Additionally, students must have the I-901 fee paid before they can register. In SEVIS' real-time interface (RTI), a flag displays at the top of the *Student Information* page that indicates whether the student has paid the I-901 fee.

Q: Can we enter email and telephone information in both the Registration action and the Personal Information update?

A: Yes, users can use both actions to add email and telephone information.

Auto-Terminations

Registration

Q: What are SEVP's plans for the auto-termination of the SEVIS record for failure to register after the June 2016 Release?

A: Currently, SEVIS allows DSOs to register students up to 60 days after the Program Start or Next Session Start Date. Students are terminated at 60 days. Eventually, it will match the regulatory 30-day limit. However, we must first ensure the Mass Registration action (part of the June 2016 Release) is working properly.

Unemployment

Q: Has SEVP decided when to begin auto-terminations for more than 90 days of unemployment?

A: Auto-terminations may not begin in 2016. SEVP must address other issues first, including updates related to the OPT STEM rule, the unemployment counter, and various employment-related alert lists. SEVP will announce when auto-terminations will begin. However, you should start working now to ensure that the students' OPT records are accurate.

Q: Will SEVIS notify students when it terminates them for unemployment? Will the school need to do that?

A: Currently, there are not any plans to notify students of their termination via SEVIS.

Alert and Student Lists

Q: Will there be an alert list for students who have not paid their I-901 fee?

A: The new alert list for students who cannot be registered will include those who have not paid the I-901 fee.

Q: What sort of alert lists are planned for OPT-related issues?



- A: We already have an alert list for students on post-completion OPT without employer information. We are now working on the following alerts:
- Students in the first 12 months of post-completion OPT with 60 days of unemployment
 - Students on STEM OPT with 90 days of unemployment
 - Students who are terminated for exceeding the OPT and STEM unemployment allowances

Q: Will there be an alert list for students who need updated telephone and email information?

A: This information is in a downloadable report, which you can get to from your main school page. We did not use an alert list for this, because SEVIS creates alert lists when a DSO clicks the alert link. The longer the list, the more resources it requires. For many schools, this list would be very long. Multiple schools opening this alert list simultaneously could potentially slow SEVIS to a crawl.

As schools catch up with the new reporting requirements, we will create an alert for students who cannot be registered. That list will give you a reason for the registration block—the student is missing an address, I-901 fee payment, telephone information, etc. DSOs will be able to sort the list by the reason.

Q: Will the look of the alert and student lists change with the June 2016 Release?

A: Yes, it will. After the June 2016 Release, the alert and students lists will be sortable by column, searchable, downloadable into Excel, CSV, or PDF, and then printable.

Miscellaneous

Q: Can F-2 and J-2 dependents be under four years old?

A: Yes, the age limit is only for the primary F-1 and J-1. Also, we doubt there is anyone in our F-1 or J-1 population who is over 100 years-old. We have set the upper limit, because it is so easy to enter 100 years through a typo.

Q: Will SEVP remove the Normal Length of Study field from all education levels?

A: Yes, that field will be removed.

Q: Will the I-901 payment flag be a part of the June 2016 SEVIS Release?

A: Yes, it will be in RTI for F-1 and M-1 students. It will display on an updated *Student Information* page.

J-1 Exchange Visitors' Information page is not changing, nor will it have an I-901 payment flag at this time. However, the requirement is still enforced.