



SEVIS Way Ahead: A Message to the Academic Community Transcript – July 2015

Hello, I'm Lou Farrell, director of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program.

Throughout the last year we've worked closely with you, the academic community, to enhance SEVIS to make it a more efficient and effective system for school users. I'm proud to announce that last month, we implemented the largest SEVIS update in recent years.

The release makes it easier to complete your SEVIS reporting responsibilities. Equally as important, the most recent upgrades strengthen the data integrity in SEVIS which ultimately supports our program's mission to protect national security, while monitoring F and M students and their accompanying dependents in the United States, as well as overseeing the process that certifies the educational institutions that they attend.

Some of the new enhancements made in this latest SEVIS release include:

- Standardized SEVIS name fields and U.S. address verification that were added to validate and improve SEVIS data accuracy,
- Improved search functionality that offers designated school officials the ability to search the system by all SEVIS name fields, and finally,
- Email address standardization that includes format validation and auto-correction to help alleviate common email address entry errors.

In addition to these enhancements, SEVIS now accommodates the recent regulation change which permits schools to nominate an appropriate number of designated school officials based on their specific school population needs.

And finally, one of the most notable enhancements from the latest SEVIS release is a redesign of the Form I-20, making it both easier to read and to update. Based on feedback from the academic community, SEVP will no longer pre-print the DSO name in the travel signature section of the Form I-20, and the system will also offer mass reprint functionality, allowing you to reprint Forms I-20 for multiple students at a time.

Now, initially, there were some minor technical issues with the release. But we were able to correct them very quickly. Given the massive nature of this release, we are pleased that the issues were minimal and appreciate your patience in dealing with them.

You can learn more specifics about the redesigned Form I-20, as well as recent and future SEVIS releases, in the new SEVIS Help Hub on Study in the States. The SEVIS Help Hub is designed specifically for designated school officials. Once completed, it will offer everything you need to know about SEVIS reporting requirements, including job aids, frequently asked questions and webinars. Be sure to visit the SEVIS Help Hub today and provide your feedback as we continue to add new information regularly.

SEVIS enhancements will continue. Coming this November, DSOs will be able to enter SEVIS information about multiple employers, instead of just one, for a student participating in optional practical training. In addition, SEVP will improve your ability to view a student's record history in SEVIS. Currently, the event history page summarizes updates made to a student record since it was created, but the page does not always provide enough detail. Come November, the improved event history page will specify changes made to a student's SEVIS record, including what was listed both before and after the update, making it easier for you, the DSO, to see what student information has changed.

On behalf of all of us at SEVP, I want to thank you for your assistance throughout the past several months leading up to the most recent SEVIS release. We look forward to your continued support with future SEVIS enhancements. You are critical to ICE's national security mission, as well as to the success of your nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors. We are most grateful to be working with you.