

## **STUDENT & EXCHANGE VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEM (SEVIS)**

SEVIS stands for Student Exchange Visitor Information System, which operates under the Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). SEVP changes “the nonimmigrant student and exchange visitor (F, M, & J visa categories) process, converting what is currently a manual procedure into an automated process. This change is expected to improve data collection and reporting, enhance customer service, facilitate compliance with regulations, and help the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) better monitor school and exchange programs.” SEVIS is the “Internet-based system that maintains accurate and current information on non-immigrant students (F and M visa), exchange visitors (J visa), and their dependents (F-2, M-2, and J-2). SEVIS enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information and event notifications via the Internet, to the INS and Department of State (DOS) throughout a student or exchange visitor’s stay in the United States. The system will reflect international student or exchange visitor status changes, such as admission at Port of Entry (POE), change of address, change in program of study, and other details. SEVIS will also provide system alerts, event notifications, and basic reports to the end-user schools, programs, and INS field offices.” (Quoted from the INS website).

NOTE: Beginning March 1, the INS was absorbed into the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and has been divided into the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE) under the Directorate of Transportation and Security.

SEVIS does not make the International Center an enforcement arm of the DHS. However, the International Center does have to report data directly, via the SEVIS Web site, to the INS. All requests and updates must be entered into SEVIS, whether they are for extensions, adding dependents, changing majors, readmission to the graduate level, change of address, or even enrollment each semester.

The F1 and J1<sup>1</sup> student/exchange visitor needs to be more aware of his/her responsibilities as a non-immigrant in order to comply with stringent federal rules and regulations. Student/exchange visitors with F1 and J1 visas need to inform the International Center at their institution of any changes in name, address, enrollment, program (degree or major), funding (major changes only), or enrollment as soon as possible. As a general rule, they should always enroll in a full course of study and consult with an adviser before making any changes in their enrollment or initiating any withdrawals.

A Powerpoint presentation about SEVIS, the reporting requirements, and how it works, can be seen at <http://www.fsu.edu/~fsu-isc/sevis/PPPStudents.pps>.

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<sup>1</sup> J1 exchange visitor includes research scholars, faculty, postdoctoral employees.