



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

December 22, 2004

OFO:IPP:CB

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTORS, FIELD OPERATIONS  
DIRECTOR, PRECLEARANCE OPERATIONS

FROM: Acting Executive Director  
Immigration Policy and Programs

SUBJECT: International Students and Exchange Visitors Returning  
from Winter Break 2005

Ports-of-entry (POEs) will soon experience an influx of international students and exchange visitors returning to the United States from travel abroad. In general, a bonafide student or exchange visitor will be in possession of a valid, unexpired SEVIS Form I-20 or SEVIS-generated DS-2019, respectively, authorized for travel and a valid non-immigrant visa in the appropriate classification. However, the SEVIS Program Office (SEVP) has notified Customs and Border Protection (CBP) of instances where a designated school official (DSO) or program sponsor has requested a correction to a SEVIS record that was incorrectly identified as "Terminated" or "Completed", possibly resulting in the creation of an erroneous "SEVI" hit. To assist CBP Officers in determining the status of a student or exchange visitor, SEVP has developed a website identifying SEVIS records with inaccurate SEVIS data that are pending correction by the SEVIS Help Desk <http://www.ice.gov/sevis>.

**Background:** Generally, a "data-fix" is requested because the student or exchange visitor record was set to an incorrect status in SEVIS. The incorrect status is usually a result of user error or the failure of the school or program official to perform a required action, such as registering the student when they began classes or validating that the exchange visitor has begun participation in the program. The SEVIS record remains in Terminated or Completed status until a manual update of the record is performed. Refer to the attachment for additional information.

Nonimmigrants with a SEVIS record in any status other than Initial or Active who wish to travel outside the United States, are being advised to meet with the DSO or program sponsor to report any pending travel and verify submission of a data-fix request to the SEVIS Help Desk. If the SEVIS Help Desk successfully verifies the information, an automated e-mail providing a confirmation (ticket) number will be transmitted to the originator. The school/program official will print the verification page listing the confirmation (ticket) number and give it to the student or exchange visitor for travel purposes.

**POE Processing:** In general, a student and exchange visitor with a pending data-fix will present a confirmation notice identifying a pending data-fix. SEVP will post a listing of the students and exchange visitors with a pending data-fix on the SEVIS intranet web site <http://www.ice.gov/sevis> for the POE to verify the information. The list will provide the following information for each pending data-fix:

- Nonimmigrant's full name
- Country of citizenship
- Date of birth
- SEVIS ID number
- School/campus name or program name

CBP Officers may admit a student or exchange visitor to reenter the United States with a confirmation notice that can be verified on the web page, if otherwise admissible. The data-fix request information is only available on the web page; the SEVIS record or the SEVIS form will not reflect a pending data-fix request. Readmit under the proper nonimmigrant visa classification for the remainder of the program (D/S for F and J classifications, date specific for M classifications) under existing guidelines. A Form I-515A, Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor is not to be issued.

The academic community was notified of these procedures through a broadcast message issued December 21, 2004. As a result, there is a chance that a student or exchange visitor may have departed the U.S. prior to the issuance of these guidelines. Therefore, a nonimmigrant lacking a confirmation letter may be readmitted if identified on the SEVP web page as having a pending data-fix.

Commonly asked questions regarding re-entry of international students and exchange visitors are addressed in the SEVIS Program Office web site at <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel>

The SEVIS website was launched on December 21, 2004 and will remain active through January 31, 2005. The site will be monitored by the SEVIS Help Desk between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM EST, Monday through Friday. If the site is unavailable for an extended period of time, CBP Officers should contact the SEVIS Help Desk or send an e-mail to the SEVIS Help Desk at [sevishelpdesk@eds.com](mailto:sevishelpdesk@eds.com).

Questions regarding this procedure may be directed to T. Mark Hill at (202) 344-2652.

Michael J. Hrinyak /s/

Attachment