Getting Students Ready to Enter the United States

Understanding the initial steps is key to properly maintaining SEVIS records.

1. Applies to an SEVP-certified school
   - Must apply in writing.
   - Must meet admission requirements.
   - Must prove financial support.

2. Sends acceptance letter

3. SEVP-certified School

4. Applies for student visa or change of status to F or M
   - Must have valid Form I-20.
   - Must pay I-901 SEVIS Fee.
   - Must meet all visa requirements.
   - Must use the same Form I-20 for I-901 SEVIS Fee payment, visa application and admission at the port of entry.

5. U.S. Department of State
   - Issues student visa

6. If entering the United States
   - Presents Form I-20.
   - Presents student visa.
   - May NOT enter more than 30 days prior to program start date.

7. U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer
   - May issue Form I-515A, "Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor," if student is missing documentation.

8. Report to DSO
   - Must report within 30 days of and no later than the program start date.

9. PDSO/DSO orients the student and registers in SEVIS

For SEVIS technical questions, call: 800-892-4829 or email SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov
Contact the SEVP Response Center at SEVP@ice.dhs.gov or 703-603-3400 for policy questions
For more information, visit http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov

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