



## Professional International Educator Roundtable – PIER

### Minutes PIER Meeting

June 18, 2008

2:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

National University Spectrum Center

#### **A. Welcome**

- a. Melissa Diaz welcomed the PIER Members to the last PIER Meeting of the 2007-2008 year. She announced that Karla Macias will be the PIER Chair for 2008-2009.

#### **B. PIER Announcements**

- a. **PIER Chair-Elect Announcement:** Karla Macias presented appreciation certificates to Melissa Diaz for her work and contribution to PIER as PIER Chair for the 2007-2008 year and to Hao Nguyen for two years as PIER Membership Coordinator for the years 2006 to 2008.
- b. **PIER Membership Report:** Currently 108 PIER Members. The 2008-2009 PIER Membership application will be posted on the PIER website in late July/early August.
- c. **Treasurer Report:** \$38.88 Savings Account \$116.13 Checking Account
- d. **Webmaster Report:** Please think about what resources as a PIER Member you would like on the PIER website. PIER is considering a login for member only resources.

#### **C. Traditional PIER Member Introductions:**

#### **D. Special Guest Speaker Tammy Lim from the Jewish Family Service (JFS)**

- a. Ms. Lim presented information about their Prins Asylum Program and Services
  - i. The JFS Prins Asylum Program is a nonprofit organization who gives free legal advice for those seeking asylum. JFS focuses on community outreach programs.
  - ii. Students, Scholars and Professors and their families can take advantage of their asylum services.
  - iii. Referral program to a network of pro bono attorneys working with those seeking asylum
  - iv. Those seeking asylum have a current fear of persecution in their native country or were previously persecuted. This includes religion, race, nationality, political opinion and/or social group.
  - v. Tammy Lim can be contacted at 1-858-637-3038 or [tammyl@jfssd.org](mailto:tammyl@jfssd.org)
  - vi. Handouts were given explaining their services.

#### **E. NAFSA National Conference PIER Travel Grant Recipient Danielle McMartin Presentation:**

- a. Danielle reminded PIER Members that the PIER Travel Grant is sometimes available to assist with the travel cost to attend the NAFSA National Conference and sometimes the NAFSA Regional Conference. She suggested attending at least one NAFSA National Conference. Next year's NAFSA National Conference will be in Los Angeles.

- b. She reviewed the highlights of the NAFSA National Conference. Her PowerPoint presentation is attached. 9000 people with 3000 from overseas attended this year's NAFSA National Conference. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox was the Plenary Speaker who gave an eloquent speech. A highlight was a session with the then President Candidate's foreign policy advisors. She enjoys attending the NAFSA Regional Highlights were the best session from the NAFSA Regional Conferences is offered at the NAFSA National level.
- c. Her presentation focused on her favorite session "Peer Helper Leadership Program" at Malaspina University in Canada and immigration updates.
  - i. **Peer Helper Program Different Benefits to Different Stakeholders**
    1. New Arrivals-First friends
    2. Peer Helpers- Leadership and personal development
    3. International Office-Logistics support and workers
    4. Institutional-Student retention strategy
  - ii. **How does the Peer Helper (PH) Program Work?**
    1. Have current students apply to be PH's, answering questions about their personal experience. Approx 20 are chosen (she has about 40 apply each semester)
    2. PH's attend and assist with all int. std. orientations
    3. Each PH is "assigned" to 4-6 new international students
  - iii. **Strengths of the PH Program:**
    1. High Expectations of their PH's
    2. They plan & present material at orientation
    3. They give input to "what is really helpful to know at orientation"
    4. They commit to several connecting points with the new students throughout the semester
    5. Training of the Peer Helpers
    6. PH's participate in a 2 or 3 days training retreat
    7. Big Celebration at the End of Semester

Danielle will be asking for their training material. If anyone would like more information or a copy of what I receive, please e-mail her at [dmcmarti@csusm.edu](mailto:dmcmarti@csusm.edu)

**d. Immigration Updates:**

1. Proposed Rule on SEVIS Fees and Recertification
  - a. SEVIS Fee expected to be raised to \$200.00.
2. See flyer: Oct 1, 2008 effective date!
3. Interim Final Rule for OPT
4. Extending Period of OPT by 17 months for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students with STEM Degrees AND Expanding the Cap-Gap Relief for All F-1 Students with Pending H-1B Petitions!
5. Effective: April 8, 2008

**Major Provisions of the Rule:**

- All F-1 students eligible for post-completion OPT may apply for OPT up to 60 days after completion date. (grace period)
  - a. CSC: Will Accept up to 90 days prior-60 days after
  - b. App must arrive at CSC w/in 30 of SEVIS Rec. by DSO
- ◆ Limits Number of Days student can be unemployed during post-completion OPT:
  - c. 90 for non-STEM post-completion OPT
  - ◆ 120 for STEM OPT students
- ◆ Clarifies that Post-completion OPT can be:
  - d. Part-time, Full-time, Volunteer & multiple "gigs"
- ◆ Pre-Completion OPT can be applied for up to 90 prior to "academic year completion" or 120 prior to start date if student has been in status a year already

- ◆ Cap Gap employment for F-1 students who are the beneficiaries of an H-1B petition...accepted in a given year: Automatic extension of F-1 status and for those on OPT---Extension of their employment authorization.
- ◆ Extends work & stay from End of OPT to Oct 1 start date of H-1B
- ◆ Offers additional 17 months of Post- Completion OPT to students earning bachelor's , masters, or doctoral degree in the STEM fields:
  - ▶ Science, Technology, Engineering, Math
  - ▶ Provided their employer is registered with the USCIS E-Verify program

***Random items from CSC Update:***

- ◆ Be sure you are using the most recent I-765, CSC will accept old version up to: July 8
  - ▶ New Version Dated: May 27, 2008
- ◆ Keep putting the 14 month statement in the 1st comment box of the I-20 when recommending OPT in SEVIS
- ◆ EAD's should be issued by CSC w/In 90 days
- ◆ When applying for OPT, wise to clarify all previous OPT & CPT
- ◆ CSC Still allowing for Univ. address to be used for sending Receipt & EAD even if student moves to other area of U.S.

- F. PIER Members discussed the implications and difficulties with the new OPT Rule. It was suggested that members review the rule on the ICE website at [www.ice.gov/sevis](http://www.ice.gov/sevis) and continue to bring their questions and concerns to the PIER Meetings
- G. Kasey McCarthy presented information on SEVIS II. The *SEVIS II Handout* and the *SEVIS June 2008 Newsletter* is attached.
- a. Kasey highlighted the changes that will be made with SEVIS II from the SEVIS II handout.
    - i. SEVIS Update:
      1. According to SEVP:
      2. #1: Be Consistent
      3. Register Students following SEVP guidelines
      4. Many "gray areas" with CFR
      5. The CFR is your first point of reference, NAFSA Advisor manual and colleagues are your second point of reference
      6. You will see many changes with SEVIS II
      7. New OPT Rule (covered by Danielle McMartin)
    - ii. SEVIS II:
      1. Release date: Fiscal Year 2009
      2. Elimination of paper I-20
      3. Single SEVIS Number
      4. Interface with all agencies
      5. Online Training
      6. All current SEVIS data will be transferred
      7. Student interaction:
      8. Establish their own account
      9. Ability to update their personal information (U.S. address/home country address)
      10. Submit a request to DSO through SEVIS II
      11. Once the student has been issued their visa by the U.S. Consulate, the school for which the student will attend will be notified. All other SEVIS II records will be cancelled. (added by Melissa Diaz after presentation)

**A Unique Identifier System**

12. Introduces a one-person, one-record” system that will help reduce data inconsistencies and duplications and reduce document fraud through the use of biometric identifiers.

**A Paperless System**

13. Decreases reliance on paper forms and allows for the real-time update of all forms, moving users toward a paperless environment.

**Improved Efficiency**

14. Expedites standard transactions for students and school administrators by integrating information and offering real-time availability of completed forms.

**Simplified Interface**

15. Consolidates previously separate data management systems into a single portal with a unified look and feel.

**Enhanced Usability**

16. Simplifies data entry via standardized formatting and uniform procedures, making the program more user-friendly and reducing the opportunity for errors.

**Comprehensive Training Module**

17. Improves convenience and reduces costs for training SEVIS II users through an online training guide.

**Advanced Query and Reporting Tools**

18. Enhances search capabilities by consolidating information to enable searches based on specific criteria such as academic major, criminal history, immigration status and more.

**Integrated, Real-Time Information-Sharing**

19. Integrates threat-tracking systems used by various law enforcement agencies to coordinate more effective investigations and enables real-time automatic notifications and alerts to law enforcement agents to facilitate more timely investigations.

**H. PIER Member Announcements:**

- a. Barbara Clark: Job Announcement for Grossmont College’s International Student Counseling Temporary Job Availability (Part-time Substitute) at Office beginning August 11, 2008
- b. Karla Macias: Job Announcement for UC San Diego International Student Advisor position. Announcement already sent to PIER Members
- c. Melissa Diaz: Job Announcement for National University Director of Language Programs.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.**