



Professional International Educator Roundtable – PIER

Minutes PIER Meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

2:00 pm

Green Hall, Alliant International University

I. Welcome

- a. Michael E. Pittenger, PhD - Associate Vice President for Student Life, Alliant International University
- b. Remesha Lionel, MIBA - Interim Coordinator of International Students Services, Alliant International University
- c. Some facts about Alliant:
 1. 95% graduate students
 2. Collection of 3 schools (California School of Professional Psychology, Graduate School of Education, Marshall Goldsmith School of Management) and 2 centers (Center for Forensic Studies, Center for Undergraduate Education)
 3. San Diego campus is largest of 6 in California
 4. 80% women

II. Traditional Introduction of PIER Members

III. PIER Business

- a. Membership (Karen)
 1. Should be up-to-date; anyone with questions should see Karen
 2. Currently 100+ members
- b. Treasurer (Lilia)
 1. Current Balance of Checking account: \$1584.73
- c. Chair-Elect (Karla on behalf of Kasey)
 1. New Professionals Workshop
 - i. Information sent via email
 - ii. Workshop to cover basic immigration information, SEVIS procedures, employment; highly recommended for new professionals
 - iii. Reminders to be sent throughout next few weeks

IV. Q&A

- a. Recertification (Karen Roque, Fashion Careers College)
 1. FCC: M-1 vocational school; 125 students, 5 international
 - i. part of first wave of recertification notices
 2. All information available online; best to review information given very carefully
http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/recert_dso_presentation.pdf
(Powerpoint Presentation: "Recertification Primer")
http://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/broadcast_text_recert_092508.pdf (Recertification broadcast message)
 3. Printed information incorrect; has led to many phone calls to SEVIS
 4. Kasey McCarthy has been a great resource ☺
 5. 400 schools notified through email
 6. Timeline: see pages 2-4 of broadcast message and slide 9 of Powerpoint presentation
 7. Petition submission: only PDSO can submit
 - i. suggest changes be made prior to beginning process
 - ii. EMAIL only → everything electronic, including electronic signature
 - iii. 180 days to complete process
 8. Complete package: slide 13 of Powerpoint presentation
 - i. NOTE: once submitted, can not appeal
 9. Scorecard: slides 20, 29-32
 10. Contact information: phone numbers not accurate, but email address works: sevis.source@dhs.gov (additional contact emails on slide 34)

UPDATE: As of January 27, 2009, implementation of recertification notifications has been delayed. Please see http://nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/regulatory_document_library.dlib/sevis/sevp_notifies_sevis_users_for_the_full_announcement.

b. Misc.

1. Q: *Can international students attending language schools audit classes at other universities?*
A: Yes, as long as the student meets their sponsoring school's requirements for remaining in good standing; the school at which the student is auditing classes may ask for a letter from their program sponsor ok-ing this.
2. Q: *How do you handle a student that has changed their status at one school that wants to transfer to another school?*
A: Only accept the transfer after the student reports to the school that processed the change of status. Continue to keep a close eye on the student's record.

3. Q: *We have had students stopped at the Oceanside Transit Station/Center by officials in green uniforms; has anyone else had students reporting this?*

A: No other schools' students have reported this.

4. Q: *Due to the depreciating value of certain countries currencies, we are experiencing an increased request for work authorization based on economic hardship; are these requests being approved by USCIS?*

A: We are not sure. If anyone has filed an application for economic hardship and gotten results, either approval or denial, please email info@piergroup.org so that we can share this with PIER.

5. Q: *We are a professional golf school going from M-1 to F-1. We are unable to get any answers from anyone regarding questions about this transition. Does anyone know of any contacts that may be able to assist us?*

A: No one at the meeting has experienced this. Several members recommended contacting CSC directly. If you have had experience or know what a good resource would be, please email info@piergroup.org so that we can share this information with PIER.

6. Q: *Do students renewing their visa have to pay the SEVIS (I-901) fee again?*

A: If the student has already paid their fee they do not have to pay the fee again, unless they have been issued a new SEVIS ID; you only pay the fee once per SEVIS ID. More information can be found here: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/faq3.htm>

7. Q: *Is the 5-month rule on visas being strictly enforced?*

A: This is different for each consulate. For example, the US embassy in Dubai will not let a student apply for a new visa if their current visa is still valid. It is best that the student contact the embassy/consulate where they are applying to verify their policies. A list of US embassies can be found here:

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

8. Q: *How do you define incidental study?*

A. Intent: If a student comes to a school for the purpose of study, then it is not considered incidental. If a student is here with a purpose other than study, then it is considered incidental. Examples could be recreational courses or courses not being applied to some sort of degree or certificate program.

9. Q: *Are H-1B or L-1 scholars allowed to study full-time?*

A. Institutional policies may vary. At UC San Diego, this is allowed as long as the scholar shows that they have permission from their employer and are continuing to meet the requirements of H-1B status.

V. Announcements

a. Change to Visa Waiver Program (VWP)

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/esta/

1. New countries added (such as South Korea)
2. Implementation of Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA)

b. NAFSA Regional Conference

1. Call for Volunteers; contact Kasey for more information
2. Still need co-chairs for Special Events and Exhibits

c. PIER Website

1. Webmaster Mike is currently updating the site
2. Expect total revamp by March

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.