

NAFSA Region XII Southern California District Newsletter

(February 2014)

Announcements from Southern California District Team

Greetings Southern California District!

SoCal District Team 2014

Congratulations and welcome to our new SoCal District Team members; Mardy Arenas (Intensive English Programs (IEP) Rep) from EC – Los Angeles, Tonia Pizer (Communications Coordinator) from UCSD and Nicole Sheldon-Desjardins (Education Abroad Rep) from Claremont McKenna College. And to our returning Team member, Mackenzie Bristow, in her new role as Chair-Elect. Thank you to our members rotating off the Team for their dedicated service and contributions to the District: Kasey McCarthy, La Sharon McLean Perez and Laura Flower Kim. Meet the entire 2014 SoCal District Team on the [Region XII website](#).

District Survey

The Southern California District Team is responsible for planning and implementing activities for the membership of the Southern California District. We are seeking your input on what professional development trainings, activities and events you would like to have offered by the District in 2014.

Please complete the survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2014SoCalEvents>

NAFSA Advocacy Day & Travel Grant

Region XII is awarding four travel grants in support of attending NAFSA Advocacy Day. There will be one grant awarded to one individual per district (Hawaii/Pacific District, Southern California District, Northern California District, and the recently formed Nevada District). The grant award has increased for 2014 and the Southern California District representative will receive \$1,000.

Travel Grant Information

Deadline is Wednesday, February 26

Application and

details: http://www.nafsa.org/Connect_and_Network/Engage_with_a_Community/NAFSA_Regions/Region_XII/About/Advocacy_Day_Grants/

Request grant application at: region12treasurer@gmail.com

Advocacy Day Information

Registration Deadline is Monday, March 3

Application and details

at: http://www.nafsa.org/Attend_Events/Advocacy/Advocacy_Day/Advocacy_Day_2014/

District Listserv

The SoCal District Team will update the way we distribute the quarterly newsletter by migrating email

addresses to Google Groups. Please watch your inbox for an invitation to join the group to continue to receive the newsletter and announcements.

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International Student Updates

NAFSA Provides Additional Tips for Electronic I-94 Record Retrieval

Are your students still coming to you for help finding their I-94 record on the CBP website? Following last Fall's compilation of CBP-Tips for record retrieval, the Travel Subcommittee of NAFSA's International Student and Scholar Regulatory Practice Committee (ISS-RP) has since compiled further tips to assist in this

endeavor: http://www.nafsa.org/Find_Resources/Supporting_International_Students_And_Scholars/Committee_Updates/ISSRP/Electronic_I-94_Record_Retrieval_Tips/ If all else fails, you can refer your student to your local CBP Deferred Inspections Office for further assistance.

NAFSA Comments On DHS Proposed Rule To Adjust Limitation On Number Of DSOs And Permit Part-Time Study For F-2 And M-2 Dependents

NAFSA submitted comments on this proposed rule to SEVP on January 17, 2014. In addition to their comments on the two proposals, NAFSA included these excellent suggestions:

- Process DSO updates quickly and in a streamlined manner;
- Publish the criteria on which SEVP's adjudications of DSOs nominated by schools will be based;
- Articulate to schools the basis for any denials of a DSO nomination or other requested change;
- Establish a reconsideration process that may be pursued by schools that consider a denial to be in error;
- Consider allowing an applicant for change of status from F-2 to F-1 to begin a full course of study as soon as the application is properly filed, and to allow F-2 to F-1 applicants who are not enrolled in a full course of study at the time their change of status application is granted, to begin their full course of study in the next available term or session.

Read the entire letter

here: http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedFiles/Chez_NAFSA/Find_Resources/Supporting_International_Students_And_Scholars/ISS_Issues/NAFSA%20DSO%20F2%20study%20comment%20FINAL.pdf

Now that the comment period has closed (January 21), DHS will analyze all public comments, return the rule to OMB for additional review, and then publish the rule again in the Federal Register as a final or interim final rule with a specific effective date.

SEVP Announces Transition of Help Desk

In their Broadcast Message of January 2, SEVP announced that in 2014 they will transition the SEVIS Help Desk into the SEVIS Response Center. SEVP said this transition will "better serve our customers by placing all support functions in a single location. The transition also reduces overlap, improves our internal communication and standardizes our knowledge for consistency of service." We look forward to those improvements! Stay tuned to future broadcasts for more information on the date that transition will take place.

Problems With I-94 Information After Taking a Cruise

An interesting dialog was recently posted on NAFSAs International Student Advising Network regarding inconsistencies in how CBP handles entry and exit data in the electronic I-94 records of students who go on closed loop cruises. To read those posts—and many other interesting situations and helpful solutions, read below...

Join the International Student Advising Network!

Connect with your NAFSA colleagues to ask and share advice and feedback on concerns and issues. Post questions about day-to-day operations of your office, advising, campus or immigration policy, or whatever you need to know to make your professional life better. <http://www.nafsa.org/groups/home.aspx?groupid=9>

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International Scholar Updates

Changes in the USCIS Customer Service Phone Line this February

USCIS has announced that its Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, which is used to provide customers with case status and other information from the National Customer Service Center, will get a redesign on February 1.

From USCIS: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is pleased to announce the launch of a new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system that provides customers with streamlined access to immigration information, case status, and customer service representatives. Beginning February 1, callers will hear new series of messages when calling the USCIS toll-free National Customer Service Center number at [1-800-375-5283](tel:1-800-375-5283). The IVR system was redesigned in response to stakeholder and customer feedback to better serve USCIS customers. The IVR is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and live assistance is also available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm in the continental U.S. To supplement the new IVR system, USCIS has developed updated public education materials on its website to help customers better understand the immigration process. In addition to its toll-free number and educational resources, USCIS continues to offer customers a variety of online self-service tools through its www.uscis.gov/tools web page, including the ability to check case status, change their address, and submit a case status inquiry.

February Visa Bulletin

- The India EB-2 priority date holds at November 15, 2004 and the EB-3 priority date remains September 1, 2003;
- China EB-2s continue their recent pattern, advancing exactly one month to January 8, 2009;
- The priority date for China, Mexico and “Rest of World” EB-3s advanced two months to June 1, 2012;
- The priority date for Philippines EB-3s advanced two months to April 15, 2007.

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Education Abroad Updates

Diversity Abroad Webinar:

“Unique Risks: Health and Safety Concerns for LGBTQ Study Abroad Students”

February 20, 2014

Join Diversity Abroad for a webinar focusing on health and safety issues of special relevance to LGBTQ students and tips for advising LGBTQ students on these issues. The webinar will be held on February 20, 2014, 2:00-3:15 pm EST. More information and registration information:

<http://diversitynetwork.org/health-safety-abroad-lgbtq>

San Diego Lessons from Abroad Conference

February 22, 2014

The University of San Diego is hosting this year’s San Diego Lessons from Abroad Conference on February 22, 2014. The conference is aimed at students returning from abroad and provides opportunities for networking, learning to apply skills developed abroad to the job search, connecting to resources for work and study abroad post-graduation, and sharing stories from abroad. More information and registration information: <http://www.lessonsfromabroad.org/sandiego/>

NAFSA Webinar:

“Advising International Students on Education Abroad”

February 25, 2014

As many campuses are seeking to increase numbers of international students as well as numbers of students participating in study abroad, the crossover between these two groups is also increasing. This webinar will discuss successful collaborations between international student advisors and education abroad advisors to share tips for advising international students wishing to participate in study abroad. The webinar will be held on February 25, 2014, 3:00-4:30 pm EST. More details and registration information:

http://www.nafsa.org/Attend_Events/Online/Webinars/Advising_International_Students_on_Education_Abroad/

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

Deadline: March 4, 2014

The Gilman Scholarship Program provides study abroad funding for U.S. undergraduate Federal Pell Grant recipients. The application deadline for summer 2014 and fall/AY 2014-2015 study abroad programs and internships is March 4, 2014. More information: <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>

The Forum on Education Abroad's Standards of Good Practice Workshop:

“Focus on Standard 8: Crafting Emergency Action Plans and Protocols”

March 5, 2014

The Forum on Education Abroad is hosting a workshop on Crafting Emergency Action Plans and Protocols on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, CA. The workshop focuses on developing, managing, and assessing health and safety policies and procedures for education abroad programs. More details and registration information:

<http://www.forumea.org/Standard8Claremont.cfm>

Diversity Abroad Conference:

“Building Partnerships to Increase Access and Student Success in International Education”

March 30-April 1, 2014

Diversity Abroad is hosting its 2nd Annual Conference: "Building Partnerships to Increase Access and Student Success in International Education" on March 30-April 1, 2014, at the University of San Diego, CA. Join international education professionals from across the country to discuss issues related to increasing diversity in international education programming. More details and registration information: <http://diversitynetwork.org/conference>

**The Forum on Education Abroad's Tenth Annual Conference:
"New and Emerging Paradigms for Education Abroad"
April 2-4, 2014**

Registration is now open for The Forum on Education Abroad's Tenth Annual Conference: "New and Emerging Paradigms for Education Abroad" on April 2-4, 2014, in San Diego, CA. Through dialogue, reflection, and a focus on the Forum's Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad, the conference brings together education abroad professionals and faculty for a range of topics on this year's theme. More details and registration information: <http://www.forumea.org/SanDiego2014.cfm>

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International Enrollment Management (IEM) Update

Southern District Campuses Chosen to Host EducationUSA Advisor Training Institute

University of California, Irvine, The Claremont Colleges, Loyola Marymount, Cal Poly Pomona, Irvine Valley College, and Orange Coast College have been chosen as a group to host the second half of the EducationUSA Training Institute which has just started this week. The training will help EducationUSA advisors be able to advise students on how to find colleges or universities that fit their academic and professional goals. The advisors will also leave with a better understanding of college and university admission and recruitment practices. Please visit http://www.educationusa.info/conferences/workshop/professional_development/ to see an example of the call for host campuses. Some of you may wish to apply to host the institute in the future.

EducationUSA is a U.S. Department of State-supported network of hundreds of advising centers around the world. Please visit <http://www.educationusa.info/> for more information.

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Intensive English Program (IEP) Updates

Call for concerns and topics: We want to hear from you! What issues are you dealing with at your IEP center or department? What would you like to learn more about? Please take a moment to introduce yourself to Mardy Arenas via email mardyarenas@ecenglish.com

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Questions? Contact Your District Team

Your Region XII Southern District Team members are ready to assist you. If you have specific content area questions, please contact the appropriate District Team representative from our [District Team member roster](#)

From your friends on the Region XII Southern California District Team
Email: region12south@gmail.com