

INS extends deadline to implement SEVIS

Many colleges had difficulties with the Web-based system tracking international students

Jennifer Bear
Campus/Federal Politics Reporter

The federal government's Web-based system that monitors international students is still not fully implemented, even though many schools, such as the University, have been using the system for months.

American universities were supposed to start using the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System by Jan. 30. But many colleges had access problems, which prompted the Immigration and Naturalization Service to extend the deadline.

Ginny Stark, director of International Student and Scholar Services, said the University was certified to use SEVIS last fall, but several factors have slowed the

transition from paper records to Web-based records. Stark said the main problem with using SEVIS is that universities all over the country have been scrambling to input records into the system, and the overload of users can create difficulties. She added that the Office of International Programs has had to schedule their workload in the afternoons when the volume of activity on SEVIS is lower.

Ed Sale, spokesman for the Portland District Office of INS, said SEVIS is going to greatly streamline the process of monitoring international students and scholars. He argued the Web-based system will dramatically reduce fraud, cut down on the amount of university paperwork and increase security in the United States.

SEVIS was originally created so that universities could share information about international students and scholars with INS and the State

Department. Universities have been charged with sharing personal, academic and employment-related data on international students so that INS can better track their whereabouts and activities.

Besides implementing SEVIS, INS has taken several other steps to increase nation security, including a stricter, swifter enforcement of even the smallest rule violations. One example is the regulation requiring international students to notify INS when they change addresses. The regulation has been in effect for many years but was never strictly enforced.

But now if students fail to comply with this regulation, they could either be arrested, fined \$200, jailed for 30 days or deported. In addition, before they can reduce their course load below full-time status or withdraw from the University, international students must first receive OIP approval and the academic

change must be entered into SEVIS. Stark said as far as she knows, no University international students have violated any INS regulations, but there could be problems occurring at other universities in Oregon.

Sale said it is difficult to determine how many international students are facing consequences for violating INS regulations. He said INS officers examine problems on a case-by-case basis and don't keep track of student violation figures. He did say, however, that the majority of people removed from the country by INS are criminal aliens.

International students from certain countries are also being required to register with INS as a part of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System. NSEERS is part of a mandate contained in the USA PATRIOT Act, and requires males from certain countries who are 16 or older to be photographed, fingerprinted and interviewed under oath with INS.

The latest round of special registration is directed at nonimmigrants from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait.

Hope Marston, coordinator for the Lane County Bill of Rights Defense Committee, said she is skeptical of the USA PATRIOT Act and other federal government security measures. She argued they amount to racial profiling and overlook the fact that people with white skin could also be involved with terrorism. Marston said she is worried that the government is creating an oppressive society and hostile relations with other countries.

"My concern is that we treat all students equally — not based on color, where in the world they come from or what their religion is," she said.

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PFC

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four groups, and subsequently passed new budgets for the groups. All four dealt exclusively with budget issues regarding minimum-wage increases.

Shull said recalling groups was appropriate PFC business, and added that she did not think recalls required a two-thirds vote. Earlier in the day, ASUO accounting coordinator Jennifer Creighton-Neiwert said PFC had the right to do any number of things during a normal meeting, including recall budgets. PFC members emphasized they were simply interested in completing the budget process as accurately

as possible.

"We just want to make sure we get numbers right," PFC seat No. 2 Alex Dietrich explained earlier in the day.

The committee voted 4-2-1 to recall the Emerald's budget. PFC at-large member James Tilford joined Dietrich in casting the two dissenting votes. Tilford said he was worried about recalling the student newspaper before new contract negotiations took place.

Contract negotiations could be a central issue in determining a new Emerald budget. At the Emerald's original PFC meeting, the ASUO Executive, which usually purchases 10,000 newspapers as a student subscription each year, recommended

that the committee fund the Emerald's 169 issues at 10 cents an issue, and reduce the daily number of papers purchased to 6,500. After more than 90 minutes of discussion and several failed attempts to pass revised budgets, the Emerald's budget passed with a 2.81 percent increase from the previous year, and the subscription stayed at 10,000 papers, although ASUO officials said they planned to reduce the amount during contract negotiations.

PFC programs appointee Joy Nair said she was just interested in seeing how the Emerald and Tilford, the newspaper's PFC tag, came up with their original budget request of \$132,811.

"I just really want to see PFC

have to go through the same stuff ... James did," Nair said. "If we could just get a cool subscription or that rate figured out this year, well, that's a really big deal for next year's PFC."

Despite possible subscription rate adjustments, PFC members were careful to avoid saying whether they planned to raise or cut the Emerald's budget. During the past six weeks of budget negotiations, the committee has boosted student group funding from \$4,294,948 in 2002-03 to \$4,827,013, an increase of 12.39 percent.

The ASUO planned a benchmark, or allowable increase, of up to 16.15 percent, which allows

them to add up to \$161,587 to 2003-04's budget if they desire. However, PFC members added they were glad they are considerably under benchmark.

The Career Center's budget will also be discussed Monday night. PFC senator seat No. 3 Mike Sherman said he'd been approached by several student senators who wanted to hear more discussion on the career center.

Shull said she planned to contact both groups Friday, and added that notice of the recalls would be publicly posted outside the ASUO controller's office.

Contact the news editor at brookreinhard@dailyemerald.com.

8TH ANNUAL WOMEN OF COLOR CONFERENCE

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PRESENTED BY THE ASUO WOMEN'S CENTER

starts today!

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14TH THROUGH SUNDAY FEBRUARY 16TH

free and open to the public

Note: A Women's Center conference information table will be located in the EMU lobby on the main floor near the Greatful Bread. Programs available in the ASUO Women's Center, Suite 3, EMU. 346-4095

Childcare: Free childcare is provided. Check in at the information table in the Main Lobby. 19 workshops to choose from! The following provide a sample of the offerings.

Traditional Healing Methods:

Throughout the years, our healing is in the hands of others. This workshop will bring each person to recognize their own healing power in self-care and how these respected and traditional practices connect to the ancient truth of health and empowerment. Led by Dona Irene Sotelo Alvarez with translation by Anita Rojas. 10am, Fir Rm. Saturday

Parenting and Activism:

Discuss and learn parenting as activism. We want to support children and adults in community development. How activist communities can and may support raising activists as parents. Presented by Pele Smith, mother of Diallo and Selah, full time student and parent. 4pm, Coquille River Rm. Friday

Inter-Racial Relationships

This workshop is an exchange of thoughts, questions and values regarding inter-racial relationships. Whether you are a child of an inter-racial marriage, in a love relationship or have questions regarding people in your family, this session aims to build awareness. 2pm, Alsea River Rm. Saturday

Birth and Midwifery: The Ancient Art of Midwifery

How are women birthing in the year 2003? What choices are being made, and why. Led by Dona Irene Sotelo Alvarez with translation by Anita Rojas. 2pm, Metolius River Rm. Saturday

Remedios Caseros (Home Remedy)

Ella nos dice que la buena salud empieza en nuestra casa. Dona Irene Sotelo Alvarez explica como podemos cuidara: Fortalezer su sistema inmunologico. Venga a disfrutar una charla con Dona Irene, medico tradicional. 12pm, Alsea River Rm. Sunday

Sexuality in the Community of Color

Led by Chicora Martin and Kimi Mojica from the Office of Student Life. 1:30pm, Alsea River Rm. Sunday

Mexican Massage

Release with focused maneuvering of the muscles, relieve stress, alleviate insomnia, aid conception, align and ease uterine and bladder prolapse, arthritis, sciatica, support total body function. Led by Dona Irene Sotelo Alvarez with translation by Anita Rojas. 1:30pm Walnut Rm, Sunday

Sunday Keynote Presentations 5PM Ballroom

Join together in a light complimentary dinner and closing keynote presentations. Dona Irene Sotelo Alvarez: Oaxaca, Mexicana medicine woman. Susan Masten: Ms. Masten is the former National Congress of Native Americans President and currently the Yurko Tribal Chairwoman.