

Committee on International Students and Scholars (CISS)

September 30th, 2016 Minutes

Middle Georgia State University, Macon, GA. | 1:00pm, PSC Rm 237

Chair: Brett Reichert- Georgia State University – Atlanta Campus

Vice Chair: Marisa Atencio, Georgia Institute of Technology

Member at Large: Veronique Barnes, Georgia State University – Perimeter College

Member at Large: Jason Wynn, Georgia College and State University

In attendance:

Albany State University / Darton State College - Sue Ann Balch

Armstrong State University - Dorothee Mertz-Weigel

Augusta University - Beverly Myers Tarver

Clayton State University - Ryan Packard

Columbus State College - Neil McCrillis

Georgia College & State University - Susie Ramage

Georgia Gwinnett College - Casey Giacomini & Justin Jernigan

Georgia Institute of Technology - Marisa Atencio, Dr. Doug Podoll

Georgia Southern University - Tanya Brakhage & Patricia Beavan

Georgia Southwestern State University - Sarah Speir

Georgia State University - Veronique Barnes, Brett Reichert

Kennesaw State University - Julie Sharpe

Savannah State University - Joline Keevy

University of Georgia - Robin Catmur

University of North Georgia - Ronda Dowell

Valdosta State University - Danielle Bacud

Meeting was called to order: 1:06pm by Brett Reichert, CISS Chair

Brett: Introduction of the CISS committee purpose and leadership for new attendees; expect 1- 1.5 hours to get through the agenda

Motion to approve the minutes from the Jan 2016 CISS meeting- Dorothee, Armstrong; second by Julie Sharpe, Kennesaw

Brief Introductions of attendees (Angelique McClendon & Adnan Dadovic, DDS representatives)

1. DDS (Dept. of Driver Services) - Adnan Dadovic, team lead for central issuance department & Angelique McClendon the general council DDS (10-15 min.)

a. Introductions & DDS overview-

a. Adnan is responsible for leading the team who reviews cases and runs them through SAVE, quality control related to addresses

b. Process for F1/J1 students-

- a. Brett- can you address the students who are “caught in the gap” between academic semesters and aren’t eligible to obtain a renewal of their license? Can you clarify guidelines? (No response)
 - i. Adnan- What are the most common cases/concerns related to denial of cases
- b. Sue Ann- What is the grace period for an expiring license?
 - i. Angelique- There is none! The day on the DL is the date it expires.
 - ii. Adnan- this is an opportunity for us to work together/exchange numbers & contact to support individual cases; if a student sends a concern through the DDS website it will go to Adnan’s group. Suggestion that we email him directly
 - iii. Most of the time we have cases of SAVE case pending (2nd or 3rd level) USCIS is about 15 days behind in responding to SAVE cases pending. Normal processing is stated at 5 business days but their back log is creating delays for DDS.
 - iv. Brett- what is DDS communication with state/local law enforcement agencies about state driver’s policies?
 - 1. Angelique- There is no organized method at this time outside of the web based communication tools, annual required training for law enforcement agencies. This is complicated by the different jurisdictions & agencies. There is an opportunity for better/more communication but it is unfortunate that the annual training isn’t sufficient.
 - v. Tanya- If a student has a valid license but has an application for reinstatement, is the DL valid?
 - 1. Adnan- Yes, the DL is still valid as long as the student has an application pending.
 - vi. Adnan- In relation to the International DL, it is considered to be limited term and officers may be treating it as such
 - vii. Beverly- Who exactly calls individuals if they are bumped up to secondary or 3rd level processing?
 - 1. Adnan’s team is responsible for checking on the SAVE cases, being short staffed in the past the processing was slow/response may have not been as timely. As of today, a team member is calling them back, if the phone doesn’t work then they will follow up with USPS mail. We make 170+ calls daily to follow up on cases. Beverly: have you considered text or email?
 - a. Adnan- no because state funding isn’t in place. Angelique- the client can also call DDS general customer service, the contact number available on the website, 678-413-8400 (closed 12-12:30); Anyone can call to check on their SAVE case using the DDS Customer Service which will be re-directed to Adnan’s team.
 - b. Methods of contact and issuance resolution- DSO’s only can contact Adnan’s directly. His work email and direct tel # were provided to attendees but are not included in these minutes for

privacy reasons. Contact CISS Chair, Brett Reichert to request this information.

- c. Brett- Based on 2010 guidance the information needed if a DSO is going to call on behalf of a student with modifications suggested by Adnan:
 - i. Date of visit & Date of Birth
 - ii. Customer Service Center location / DDS office
 - iii. DL license #
 - iv. Full name
 - v. Gender
 - vi. SAVE case number
- d. Brett- How many DDS offices?
 - i. Angelique- 67 total in GA with different hours, volume and populations/training
- e. Brett- Can you confirm if international students have to surrender their international DL?
 - i. Adnan- No they do not need to surrender them at this time.
 - ii. Korean students only have to show their license to transfer it based on an international agreement in place
- f. Beverly- Commendations to DDS on improvements that she has seen in her experience; Thank you!
- g. Adnan- if they are cleared in SAVE they may be eligible for a 30 day extension; not all centers would know about how to handle, please advise Adnan and he can assist.
- h. Robin- When a student shows OPT endorsement on I-20 do you require proof of a job?
 - i. Adnan- No, as long as the I-20 indicates the OPT is approved. However pending OPT status won't make them eligible for the extension.
 - ii. If they have the EAD they will also be eligible for the DL extension

2. USG Update, Shaye Robinson, Office of International Education (1:39)

- a. Introduction
- b. SHIP/Insurance RFP- every 5 years the insurance plan has to be reviewed/opened; This is the 5th year but USG has been granted a 1 year reprieve based on the graduate assistant status.
- c. The RFP will include a non-ACA compliant plan
 - i. Casey, Georgia Gwinnet- Currently offering their students to offer a plan to waive out of the SHIP/PGH Global plan.
 - ii. Brett- GSU offers an optional, special topic orientation session about insurance to explain the waiver process and insurance use.
 - iii. Marisa- Build request for educational materials / video into the RFP
 - iv. Beverly- having a problem with finding a point of contact in the insurance company; we are advised to point them to a contact who won't assist J scholars; Also, please do

not forget about the Medical Evacuation & Repatriation plan being available separately for scholars.

- v. Brett- additional questions can be directed to?
 - 1. Shaye- either Tammy or myself
- vi. Beverly- request for a single point of contact for the two different populations.

d. Rotary student status- F or J visa

- i. In the past Rotary was adamant that the F visa be used. New leadership in Rotary means there is an opening for both visa options being used?
- ii. USG System/OIE office is looking for the possibility for the J visa to be used
 - 1. Tanya- J visa is more appropriate
 - 2. Beverly- F visa is being used
 - 3. Brett- Some schools have used the F visa b/c they don't have the J visa designation
 - 4. Sue Ann- How does funding source come into play? Local U.S. based Rotary clubs are funding the students to participate in the program
 - 5. Brett- Rotary has an office in Savannah called "Georgia Rotary Student Program" with 2 staff. See: <http://grsp.org/home/> email: grsp@grsp.org / tel: 912-961-1331.
 - 6. Doug- There were schools in the past who used the Rotary students to funnel into their degree programs if they could come up with their own funding to continue, but this wouldn't be possible as easily on the J visa without travel and re-entry.
 - 7. Marisa- suggests that a survey get sent out to determine what visa schools are using and how many Rotary students continue to degree completion, + any other relevant info.

e. Administration and Updates related to the USG J Exchange Program

- i. Orientation - a ppt would be available for campuses who host J EV's that could be modified as needed for individual campuses
- ii. Pre-departure & arrival materials are being updated as well
- iii. Preparing materials for re-designation at this time- may result in requesting SACS accreditation

f. Tax season- Sprintax

- i. Will be requesting schools to identify # of codes desired for the 2016 tax season
- ii. You can order less than expected and request more during the tax season to be added

3. Dept. of Labor FSLA Overtime Rules- (1:48)

- a. Brett- We all may have feedback to give on the impact on ISSS and our institutions.

- a. Variations campus to campus- For example, non-exempt employees and “clocking-in and out” once a day or four times a day?
 - b. Campus implementation and discussion; comp time at 1.5 hours of the actual time worked over 40 hours; professional development and conference participation and impact on our state GAIE association and beyond.
 - c. Coming from a University who has just experienced a huge consolidation; it becomes a second job for non-exempt staff who aren’t compensated for extra hours necessary. Consider the Human Resources impact on those who are most affected and who do so much of the consolidation work: the non-exempt staff
 - d. Susie- Have you each met with your HR folks on campus?
 - i. Consensus that most campuses are in a similar place with receiving information and being aware of the rules.
 - e. Dr. Podoll- Put a layer of the USG system in our understanding; Expect continuing change because the One USG plan will impact ALL moving forward. If newly non-exempt use vacation pay to bridge the gap, will be at 38.5% withholding rate; for every \$ you buy back on your vacation, you’ll get .60; New Peoplesoft tracking will be a part of OneUSG so eventually all non-exempt employee will be a part of the reality.
 - f. Sue Ann- Did I understand correctly the lunch conversation about USG funding?
 - i. No USG funding to schools to cover over time monetarily
 - g. Brett- let’s revisit this topic in our next meeting post-FLSA to see how it’s working.
4. Student Health Insurance Issues- (1:56) (Neil’s comments added from later discussion)
- a. Brett- since we have already discussed above & Neil is not here we will skip over.
 - b. Neil- Our concern is tied to the requirement to force students to opt. out to save \$1200 a year on health insurance; if we did not supervise the waiver process, it made many students non-compliant. The current system is creating a financial burden due to ACA compliance. At the same time there is a lot of responsibility being placed on the student to understand the importance of health insurance; overly burdensome and a free for all.
 - c. Brett- mention the previous discussion about the rationale for health insurance.
 - d. Ryan- discussion of previous experience in Seattle and what the concerns are here.
5. Immigration Updates (2:00)
- a. New format I-20 and reprint deadline: July 26th, 2016
 - a. Brett- Has anyone had issues, travel related or otherwise? No response?
 - b. STEM OPT
 - a. Brett- 7 month period to get the extension for the full 24 total. No questions asked.
 - c. SEVP Conditional Admits. Topic was skipped.
 - d. SEVP Field Representative Visits & recent CBP airport tour
 - a. Marisa- Who got to participate? Julie and Casey attended. Brett asked them to prepare brief notes to share with minutes. See addendum at end of these minutes.

- b. Sue Ann- Will I-515A's diminish?
 - i. Not likely although it may change how/when students receive them
 - c. Julie- If you have someone traveling, be sure to put notes in the remarks section; F-1 students have to go through the booths with officers; a letter from the school
 - d. Beverly- Does the travel endorsement not matter anymore?
 - i. Yes, it should still be signed but it may be less critical as CBP has more access to SEVIS data now.
 - e. Danielle- Case of initial COL case- was sent to secondary inspection;
 - f. Julie- Holly indicated they would try to do a tour every 3 months
 - g. Brett- It would be REALLY wonderful if those who were able to go would pool together to put together succinct notes on what you saw and learned for other DSOs in USG schools
 - e. SEVP Conference Highlights –
 - a. Marisa- all DSOs should be getting the emails & SEVP materials
6. Conferences & Professional Development (2:12)
- a. GAIE Summer
 - i. held at Georgia Piedmont Technical College
 - ii. Renee Francis from Exchange Visitor Program attended
 - iii. Survey to seek feedback about elimination of future GAIE summer conference
 - o Rhonda (GAIE Leadership committee)- the unofficial is the majority are in favor of eliminating the summer conference;
 - o GAIE committee needs to move from being conference planning committee to advocacy and professional development for the state
 - b. GAIE Winter Conference-
 - i. Feb. 1-3, 2017, The Graduate, Athens, GA. <http://graduateathens.com/>
 - ii. Bookmark www.gaie.org , and join GAIE listserv for updates
 - iii. To join listserv, email: breichert@gsu.edu
 - o Brett is stepping down in January so they will be looking for a new person to keep up with the listserv. Brett will provide hand-over and documentation of process.
 - c. NAFSA Region VII, Nov. 7-10, New Orleans- bi-regional conference
 - i. Early registration ends Oct. 9th.
 - ii. http://www.nafsa.org/Connect_and_Network/NAFSA_Regions/Biregional_III_VII/2016_Conference/
 - iii. SUNAPSIS, October 10-12, Atlanta at GT Hotel Conference Ctr. <http://sunapsis.iu.edu>
 - i. Demo video available on their website. Pricing for 1-999 students. Smallest client has 300.
 - iv. GILC, Feb. 17-19th, 2017. <http://gilc.weebly.com/> Rock Eagle 4-H Center, Eatonton, GA

- i. Possible GAIE/GILC consolidation
 - ii. Mike Townsend(GSU) and Chase Harvey (GT) are co-chairs
 - iii. Planning Calls- 3-4pm on Thursdays
 - a. ~~Sept. 28~~
 - b. Oct. 27
 - c. Nov. 17
 - d. December 8
- 7. Open Doors Report (2:25)
 - a. Open Doors Reports- annual data collection website: <http://www.iie.org/research-and-publications/open-doors#.V-lKnsnoldw>
 - b. Student Census/Snapshot- October
 - c. Student report – March
 - d. Scholar report- July
- 8. Spring SCIE / CISS Meeting (2:27)
 - a. Date and location TBD
 - b. CISS Input
 - i. Key focus of CISS- What impact can this committee have to better the experience for ISSS in GA and the professionals who support ISSS
 - ii. Brett: Needs assessment- We will work on a survey and get it out through USG- we won't likely use GAIE; maybe there is a way to do a secure log in? Ideally by the end of the year
 - iii. Outreach to absent/non-responsive schools
 - iv. Brett- there are 29 institutions represented (15 are not present which are most often from our smaller institutions with DSO's who are likely wearing more than one hat)
- 9. Other issues/announcements (2:36)
 - a. Brett- GSU will be hiring a foreign credential evaluator- not final/not posted yet.
 - b. Doug- The final word: Every benefits eligible employee has Red Point Travel Assistance insurance from USG system; covered anytime you are more than 100 miles away from home; excludes repatriation/evacuation to anywhere other than a U.S. residence. Email doug.podoll@ohr.gatech.edu if you have questions.
 - c. The travel assistance plan is at: http://www.usg.edu/assets/hr/benefits_docs/F66715-23_Travel_Assistance_Summary.pdf
 - d. The Red Point site is here: <http://www.redpointresolutions.com/portal/securian/> Scroll to the bottom of the page to print out your membership and information card to take with you on any trips. Please share with any USG faculty or staff who may not be aware of this coverage.
- 10. Meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm.

Addendum to CISS Minutes -

Notes on Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Visit at Atlanta Airport

Julie Sharpe of Kennesaw State University and Casey Giacomini from Georgia Gwinnett College, who attended the CISS meeting, both participated in the recent CBP visit at Atlanta airport. They provided the following notes to be added to the CISS minutes.

The CBP tour was directed from the main counter, through the Port of Entry area, over to the tri-counter, through secondary holdings, as well as the interrogation and further (criminal) holding and deportation area, finally ending at the baggage inspection area.

While there are new individual kiosks for document check in, student visas are still inspected at the individual staffed booths.

- The officers placed less importance of viewing the I-20s and more emphasis on SEVIS being up to date.
- They are asking only for the passport at the time of entry. If there is an issue, they send them a few yards over to the tri counter where the officers can view SEVIS and any SEVIS notes necessary.
- If the issue is not resolved, the student is escorted across the baggage area to “soft secondary”, where they wait in a holding area. Each person escorted to soft secondary receives an envelope with a color that indicates why they are there (document issue, violation, bag inspection, etc...). The officer reviews documents to determine if the individual will do to “hard secondary.”
- I-515s are being used less, and usually not for lack of I-20 travel signatures, although students do still need to travel with I-20, signed for travel in hand. The I-515 now has a shorter deadline for submission so that the POE officer can receive it by their deadline.
- This is where many items are confiscated such as food/plant based items to prevent unwanted invasive species of insects or bacteria.
- We observed a line for questioning in the “Hard secondary” area. There was a student and the officers were questioning him on his return trip from Cancun. They asked about the purpose of the visit, who he met with, and to empty his bag and pockets. We left before seeing the end, but those seemed to be typical questions they asked.