

CISS Agenda

January 27, 2023 | 12:30pm

Chair: Kathryn Gaylord-Miles, Kennesaw State University

Vice Chair: Allie Seay, Georgia State University

Member at Large: David Huffman, Valdosta State University

Member at Large: Kathleen Kirk, Georgia Tech

Participants (19): Jonathan Harwood, Kathryn Gaylord-Miles, Robin Catmur-Smith, Tammy Rosner, Allie Seay, Ashley Johnson, Scott Bleiweis, Tina Rousselot de Saint Ceran, Charlotte Roulet, Kristina Guinn, Ryan Packard, Alexa Lee, Lescia Gonzalez-Rivera, Lakesia Barge, Lanita Swan, Justin Jernigan, Christine Shaw, Sheila Schulte, Ralitsa Akins

Call to Order & Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Kathryn Gaylord-Miles

[September 30, 2022](#), meeting minutes are approved without objection.

USG OIE Update – Tammy Rosner

SHIP committee meetings have begun. No major changes are expected. SHIP continues to be waived for students studying outside the U.S.

IELTS **online** is not currently approved by USG for admission decisions. If you receive requests for other tests which are not currently approved to be considered for admission purposes, let Tammy know and she can open discussions on possible approval.

Verification of Lawful presence: A VOLP guidance document is still pending. Once the document is approved workshops will be forthcoming.

Student-Focused Discussion

- Spring 2023 trends: Excessive online course registration for students in their final term is an issue for many institutions. In many instances, the modification of modality after the student has registered is occurring, placing undue hardship on students to quickly modify their enrollment to meet regulated requirements. Institutional coding of modality is the best source for determining compliance in enrollment requirements.

Ideas on how ISSS can advocate and get ahead of curriculum changes/updates:

- Make connections and attend meetings with stakeholders within curriculum systems at your institution. ISSS input will help academic departments learn they should offer course modalities that do not disadvantage their international students.
 - Be a part of new academic program development discussions.
 - Academic advisors can be a strong advocate for maintenance of status. Offer to educate them on enrollment regulations. Consider providing them with swag/resources to reference when advising their international students.
 - Consider ISSS leadership being a required approver when courses petition to change modality during a term, if possible.
- There is an increased focus on career services support for current and soon-to-be graduates. [Interstride](#) is a tool some institutions are using to help students prepare for their professional life after graduation.

- Potential workshops for the ISSS community: A survey was sent to gauge interest in participating or leading a workshop, as well as the topic. We are hopeful workshops offerings can be rolled-out this spring.

Break (1:10-1:20pm)

Scholar-Focused Discussion

- Proposed USCIS fee increases: While the proposed fees are significant, it's common for USCIS fees to increase. Reminder - The comment period is still open. It's important to notify stakeholders of the likely increase. Send a communication/memo/newsletter to Deans and academic dept. Chairs so that they can begin to consider the impact to their budget. As international hires are increasing post-COVID, communication is important.

- Open Discussion:

Updates to dependent form filings and premium processing.

The Department of Labor's processing times (taking up to 13 months) along with several significant changes in prevailing wages for common academic positions are beginning to hurt hires and frustrate academic departments.

Questions were posed on how institutions determine the initial length of DS-2019 program dates for scholar categories. Are institutions issuing initial documents for the maximum duration of the scholar category, or restricting at first then extending when requested? How are schools ensuring the scholar is properly participating in their program? Institutional policies can help manage and oversee scholars who have been issued DS-2019s issued for maximum duration of category. Checking-in with scholars and their faculty is one great way to ensure information in SEVIS is correct and that they are engaging in their program.

- UGA is making progress on their J-1 STEM Employment initiative. If anyone has any questions, please contact Robin.
- In what ways can CISS best support the scholar community? Kathryn will send out a survey to gauge interesting me possibly offering a virtual meeting to discuss issues and updates in the future.

Announcements

GAIE February – February 9 & 10. Virtual Conference.

NAFSA National Conference in D.C. – May 30-June 2, 2023. Any issues or questions you wish to bring to NAFSA's attention, please contact Scott.

NAFSA Region 7 Conference – Oct 8-11. Birmingham, AL.

Next SCIE meeting – September 2023