Campus Resilience at SEVP-Certified Schools

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security understands that Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-certified schools may face emergency situations ranging from natural disasters to manmade catastrophes. These emergencies can disrupt operations and affect the safety of your faculty, staff and students.

It is important that designated school officials (DSOs) understand their role in emergency operations and keep their SEVP-certification responsibilities in mind when planning their response to campus disruptions. Specifically, DSOs should:

* Collaborate with emergency managers and other school officials to ensure that your school incorporates the unique needs of F and M students into its emergency planning, including updating and maintaining Student and Exchange Visitor Information System records.

* Work with F and M students to ensure they understand how to maintain their nonimmigrant student status during an emergency.

* Ensure international students have their emergency contact information, including a number where the DSO can be reached after business hours and an email address they regularly check.

* Explain to international students what emergency resources are available at their school and encourage international students to stay informed by signing up for campus-wide alerts.

If you are a DSO at a U.S. college or university and want to learn more about DHS's work to strengthen campus resilience and international student efforts on U.S. campuses, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Campus Emergency Management Resources page. Additionally, please refer to the below information about emergency planning in general, including other federal resources that will help your campus prepare for emergency situations.

Emergency Operations Plans

The impact of campus disruptions can be far-reaching, highlighting the need for colleges and universities to develop emergency operations plans and exercise those plans to promote a culture of preparedness and resilience on campus.

When developing an emergency operations plan, SEVP-certified schools should use a whole community approach. This means institutions should consider both lessons learned from previous emergency situations and variables such as geographic location, environment and populations served.

To support U.S. colleges and universities in their emergency planning efforts, DHS worked with its federal partners to develop the Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Institutions of Higher Education. The guide introduces new approaches to planning that includes walking through different emergency scenarios to create a course of action for each objective your school aims to accomplish. Within the guide, "A Closer Look at Incorporating International Students into IHE Emergency Management and Planning," there is a description of the unique needs of F and M students that schools should consider when planning for and responding to crises.

Exercising Emergency Operations Plans

In addition to creating an emergency operations plan, it is also very important that colleges and universities exercise their plans.

FEMA offers a variety of [emergency planning exercises](#) aimed at preparing organizations for a wide variety of emergency situations. FEMA also provides [exercise manuals](#) used at previous tabletop exercises, notably for stakeholders from institutions of higher education.

Additional Resources
- [Campus Resilience Program Resource Library](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security Additional Resources on Resilience Topics](#)
- [National Seminar and Tabletop Exercise for Institutions of Higher Education](#)
- [Department of Homeland Security Office of Academic Engagement](#)
- [Ready Campus](#)
- [School and Workplace Violence Resources](#)
- [Preparing Your Students in Case of Emergency Events](#)
- [Preparing Your School in Case of Emergency Events](#)
- [SEVP Ask the Experts Webinar: Campus Emergency Planning and the International Student Community page](#)