International Student Center Program Review

	Standing Requirements
Introduction	The International Student Center (ISC) admits and serves international students. We have the responsibility to ensure that the college and its international students are in compliance with the federal immigration regulations. We foster student learning and success by providing good customer service. The ISC is located in D-204 and there are four full-time employees: an assistant director, a senior clerk, an intermediate clerk, and a data controller. We also have five part-time employees, including two college assistants and three student workers. We have three student volunteers to assist in the ISC and each semester we have an additional thirty student volunteers during Check-in and Welcome Day. The International Student Center has continued its development in the last three years and has been making progress in serving students. The highlights since the last program reviews are: • Having hired a Data Controller in 2013 • Mailing the visa document (I-20 Forms) to overseas by Express Mail • Introducing innovations to provide better services with less work. • High efficient team work from the ISC staff The first innovation was introducing new technology to increase efficiency and reduce work load. Coordinating with the Management of Information Systems (MIS), we purchased and installed two major database systems: CCCApply and ISSM. 1. CCCApply is an online International Application which streamlines the application process for students and colleges alike. Traditionally, international students have to apply for PCC by filling out paper applications and mailing them along with other required documents to PCC. In our experience, international mail can take up to one month or longer to be delivered. Sometimes, the mail gets lost on the way to PCC, and students have to pay additional postage in order to mail the application package a second time. In coordinating with the MIS department, we installed CCCApply in 2013. We plan to launch production in May 2014. This will finally allow international students to apply to PCC online. This technological innovation will make applying to PCC convenient and much easier for prospective students, and will make admission procedures more efficient. In addition, since CCCApply communicates with Banner, the new college general database system, all applicants' data will be directly loaded in Banner automatically. The ISC no longer needs to keep large Excel spreadsheets to manage applicants and

admitted students' information.

2. ISSM is a database system that manages and processes data for international students and scholars. The first advantage of using ISSM includes largely reducing employees' workload and improving overall work efficiency and accuracy. The second advantage is that ISSM batches to the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), a data system that all SEVIS schools are required to use by the Department of Homeland Security. This batching makes the F-1 student registration reporting as easy as one click in ISSM, and we no longer have to report international student registration one by one through the real-time interface in SEVIS. The third advantage of using ISSM is that it is much easier to generate reports required by government agencies. Finally, we have an integrated system that will streamline data entry.

The second innovation was introducing a new idea to make new students' transition to PCC smoother. In collaboration with the Counseling Department and the Languages Division, an iJam program for new international students. It began in Fall 2013, and we continue to make improvements each semester.

iJam is a two-week program that was designed to help first time international students adjust to the new culture and develop strategies for succeeding in an American college, including critical reading and effective classroom behavior. After participating in this program, new students are expected to be able to identify and access necessary on-campus support services, all while developing a support network of peers.

The International Student Center has a highly motivated team which is geared towards students' learning and success. We are very proud of what we have accomplished in the year of 2013.The DHS requires strict documentation of all interactions with international students, necessitating that every action be documented in the student's file. Based on the documents prepared in 2013 for new and continuing international students, as well as prospective students, staff was responsible for updating files a total of over 29,000 times (both retrieval and replacement of files).
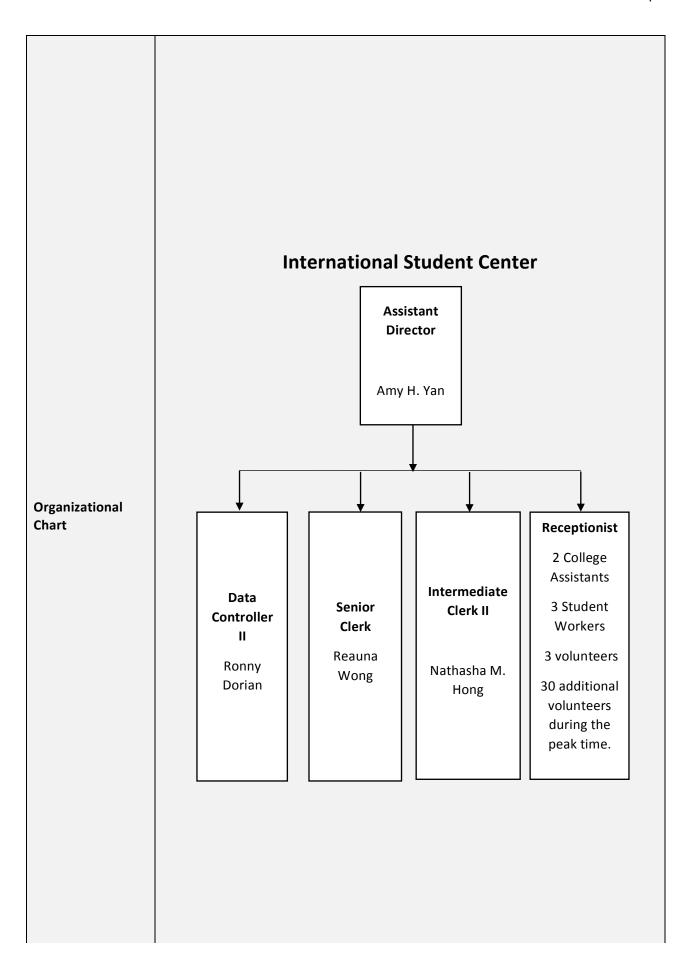
In 2013, the International Student Center received over 47,000 phone calls and emails requesting information, advice or services related to ISC functions. Through our wonderful teamwork, the ISC fulfilled 2,676 requests made by continuing students related to specific services (including, but not limited to: requests for travel authorization, official letters, invitations, transfer out and transfer recommendations, other I-20 related matters, employment documents, reinstatement services, reduced course loads, on line class permissions). Additionally, over 400 students made appointments with ISC staff.

Our support is aimed at enriching international students' experience over the entire course of their studies at Pasadena City College and enabling them to transfer to their dream four-year colleges. We also assist with problems related to social and personal adjustments to a new culture, as well as practical matters

related to living and studying in Pasadena.

Throughout 2013, new student applications totaled 1,054. Each application required numerous communications via email, telephone and fax. The total students admitted equaled 590, each required an I-20, acceptance letter, and numerous emails and phone calls. Additionally, each student was manually entered into the Banner system and ISC database. Furthermore, 2,153 students were manually registered in the SEVIS system in order to meet the DHS reporting requirement.

As the supervisor of the ISC, I am very proud to say that we have reached our goals, which are to promote student learning and success, and to ensure that the college and the F-1 status students are in compliance with federal and state regulations related to international students. All the ISC staff members including full-time, part-time, student workers, and volunteers take credit for the success.

Organizational Chart

International Student Center

Assistant Director
Amy H. Yan

Data Controller II	Senior Clerk	Intermediate Clerk II	Receptionist
Ronny Dorian	Reauna Wong	Nathasha M. Hong	2 College Assistants 3 Student Workers 3 volunteers 30 additional volunteers during the peak time.

Mission Statement	The International Student Center (ISC) contributes to and supports the mission of the college and Student Affairs by providing a high quality, academically robust learning environment that encourages and supports F1 international students' learning and success.
Program Outcomes	1. International students will be able to locate and take advantage of all available academic support services. 2. International students will demonstrate knowledge and proactivity in meeting all federal immigration regulations to maintain their F-1 student status.International students will proactivity meet all U.S. immigration regulations to maintain F-1 status.

International Student Center Review

Recommendations Update	1. Improve the ISC website with more information that meets prospective and continuing international students' needs. 2. Coordinate with the Psychological Services and the Tutor Program to provide workshops designed for international students' needs. 3. Create an immigration advisor position. 4. Create an admission advisor position 5. Create a receptionist position. 6. Create an in-house academic counselor position. 7. Increase office space to protect students' privacy during advising visits. 8. Increase budget to provide opportunities for full-time staff professional development.

Category I. Function	
Component A: Services Provided	The function of the ISC is to support PCC's Educational Master Plan to expand the International Education Program and to promote student learning and success. Our services include, but are not limited to the following: • Developing international student market by creating international student brochures, flyers, design and update the ISC website • Recruiting international students overseas and locally • Reviewing approximately 600 applications each semester • Making admissions decisions and issue visa documents for prospective international students • Providing check-in and orientation for newly arrived F-1 students • Providing new students with information on campus resources • Inviting staff from other departments to present their programs • Organizing campus tours to help new students familiarize with campus resources • Offering workshops on federal immigration regulations and college policies regarding F-1 international students • Sending email reminders about F-1 students status and college events • Processing requests for over 1,000 currently enrolled F-1 international students each semester • Assisting students to enroll in classes they need for transferring to a 4-year college and/or earning an associate degree • Advising students regarding concerns related to their study and life • Tracking F-1 international student enrollment for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and maintaining accurate records via the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) • Ensuring to meet the reporting requirements with respect to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) and DHS In 2013, our office records indicate these tasks numbered well over 7,500 for over 1,000 enrolled students and 1,000 prospective students, and 8,453 students and other visitors sought information and advising at the ISC. easure:

Category II. Institutional Support	
Component A: Budget	The ISC currently has four full-time staff members, two college assistants, three regular student workers, and three volunteers providing variety of services to the

international populations of over 500 prospective students and 1,000 continuing students each semester. The college assistants and student workers help students at the front desk. The Assistant Director and two clerks provide advising and counseling to students, in addition to their own workload, and the Data Controller supports the department with information and data-driven reports.

The program has 7 desktop computers, 6 printers, 1 copy machine, 6 telephones 1 fax machine, and 1 scanner. The college allocates a total budget of $251,174 to support the program.

Budget for Additional Positions:

In order to support the college mission and student learning outcomes, we suggest creating two additional full-time positions which include a full-time receptionist and an in-house academic counselor. The budget needed is about $144,997 for the two additional positions. This request has been included in the yearly program reviews. However, the requests have not been approved.According to the surveys we conducted in the past six years, students complained that they received different advice from the academic counselors and the ISC adviser. Students request for consistent and accurate information regarding their F-1 status and international student benefits. In order to meet the increasing demands from the international students and stay in compliance with the Department of Homeland Security requirements, the ISC needs to add one in-house academic counselor position and one immigration advisor position.

We often hear international students' complaints that the ISC staff provided different information from the academic counselors regarding immigration law and regulations related to F-1 students. This problem has remained for years because the ISC is lacking a fulltime academic counselor who possesses knowledge of academic counseling and that of the federal immigration laws.

Another student major concern is that the front desk staff was not professional and lack of the knowledge and skills needed. Students complained that the ISC's front desk was covered by different people who provided them different information all the time. This problem has remained for years because the ISC is lacking a fulltime receptionist position. The ISC must use college assistants and student workers to serve students at the reception area.

Budget for Reclassification:

The majority of our services represent high level advising and counseling in order to interpret U.S. federal and state laws/ regulations and college policies to international students. We would request to reclassify the Senior Clerk to Immigration Regulation Advisor and the Intermediate Clerk II to Admissions Advisor. The reclassification would need an additional budget of $24,000.

Budget for Professional Development: fessional Development

	The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires that all the Designated School Officials (all the current ISC full-time staff members) stay abreast of the updates of the federal immigration laws and regulations. The National Association of Foreign Student Advisors conducts an annual conference which is the only event where representatives from the DHS, Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), as well as the Department of State provide updates and responds to questions on accreditation as a requirement for SEVIS recertification, visa matters, and other topics related to international education in the U.S. In order to support staff as they pursue necessary professional development and growth, it is important for the ISC staff members to attend the annual NAFSA conference. It is important to provide the ISC full-time staff members the opportunity to grow professionally. Their need has been presented in the last three years' program reviews. However, the budget for the ISC staff professional development has been barely enough for one staff member to attend NAFSA conference each year. We ask for an increased budget of $8000 to enable more current full-time staff members to attend professional conferences and webinars each year.Therefore, the budget necessary to provide professional development for four full-time staff members is $6000.
Component B: Space Allocation	The ISC shares the office space with Assessment Services and has been operating with a 9ft by 9ft reception area and three 7ft by 7ft cubicles for advising and counseling students. During the peak time of the program, the students line up all the way to the outside of the building. In 2013, the office hosted 8,453 customers and it was extremely crowded. Many international students requested to discuss their private issues in a closed office when they met with the ISC staff. This is a very fast-paced office that serves many students. The full-time staff members will each need a private office to guarantee student confidentiality. Therefore, The current ISC workspace will have to expand in order for the office to function safely and professionally. In the last six years, the Assistant Director has been requesting a larger space for the International Student Center through program review and department and management meetings. The request was accepted and the college has been looking for a proper space for the International Student Center.

Category III. Accountability	
Component A:	**INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

Internal Accountability	**Related Program Outcome**
	1. International students will be able to locate and take advantage of all available academic support services.

Measure: Spring 2013 Survey

Description of Measure
In order to evaluate the international students' learning outcomes, the ISC administered a survey that measured the frequency of international students' use of campus resources, as well as their proactivity in maintaining F-1 status.   It was a collaborative effort of the ISC staff that developed and administered the survey. A total of 364 random international students participated in the survey on a walk-in basis in the reception area of the ISC in May 2013. See attached Spring 2013 Survey, which includes results.

We believe the survey is particularly useful in identifying the on-campus resources that are most and least used by F-1 students. Through analyzing the results, the ISC can encourage international students to take advantage of all campus resources so as to promote student learning and success.
According to the survey, 81% of international students took advantage of the priority registration date, which ensured that the students met the DHS full-time enrollment requirement. At least 82% of students check the ISC email notifications on a weekly basis, which presumably indicates that they are proactively maintaining their F-1 status. The survey also indicated that 95% of international students used the library and 49% used the services of the Counseling Department. However, only 3% used the Psychological Services and less than 30% used the Tutor Program, yet we believe that these two programs play an important role in student learning outcomes.

Psychological Services

Acceptable Target and Rationale
Based on the experience of the program director, between 20-30 enrolled F-1 students visit the ISC with personal problems every semester. Therefore, we expect that 3% of F-1 students are making use of the Psychological Services. We believe that culture shock and pressure from parents to major in subjects students are not interested in, are common examples in which F-1 students' academic performance is negatively impacted when they do not seek help.

Ideal Target and Rationale
10% of F-1 students will be comfortable to use the Psychological Services. We believe that more international students hesitate to take advantage of the Psychological Services due to cultural bias and general unawareness of the characteristics of the service.

Tutor Program

	Many international students take English as a Second Language classes and need tutoring. In Spring 2013, 30% of international students responded that they used tutoring service while we believe that the percentage can be much higher. **Recommendation for Improvements** The ISC plans to coordinate with the Psychological Services and the Tutor Program to provide workshops during the new student orientation of Fall 2014. We will invite staff from the Psychological Services and the Tutor Program to introduce their services, provide detailed information on their departments, and inform international students know how to make appointments. We will also provide handouts of the two programs' locations, schedules, and contact information, and arrange tours for international students to visit these two programs. A survey will be conducted in November and October of 2014 to assess the outcomes of recent initiatives and International constituent satisfaction will be measured. The results will be used for future improvement. **Rationales for the action:**
Component B: External Accountability	# EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY **Related Program Outcome** International students will demonstrate knowledge and proactivity in meeting all federal immigration regulations to maintain their F-1 student status. **Measure One: ISC Out-of-Status Reporting** **F-1 Out-of-Status for Incompliance** **Description of Measure:** The International Student Center is required by the Department of Homeland Security to terminate F-1 student status in SEVIS if students are incompliant with regulations. The ISC must first put forth great efforts to ensure that the F-1 students are aware of what will cause them to go out of status. This is accomplished at the beginning of every new F-1 student's academic career at PCC during Welcome Day and Orientation when the ISC delivers important information regarding maintaining F-1 status. The two most common reasons for incompliance are "Failure to Enroll" and "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units." The first of which occurs when an international student does not enroll at all for the current academic term, while the second occurs when the student has between .1 and 11.9 units at any point during an academic term without authorization to have a reduced course load. If and when an F-1 student is at risk of having their SEVIS record terminated for

either of these reasons, the ISC is vigilant and systematic in notifying the student of their incompliance and keeping track of subsequent events. The ISC orders immediate action by presenting the student with several (highly) recommended options for regaining compliance (i.e., adding more units). In any case, the student is advised to visit the ISC right away if experiencing difficulty in complying with F-1 regulations.

After several well-timed warnings, the F-1 student is terminated in SEVIS for failure to comply with F-1 regulations due either to "Failure to Enroll" or "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units." At that point, the particular student is required to visit the ISC immediately in order to receive advising on how to retain his or her F-1 status. Status retention rates depend upon several factors, such as whether or not the F-1 student is eligible for reinstatement, and, as an alternative to reinstatement, whether or not he or she is eligible for and can successfully complete reentry within the same academic term. The DHS has a special set of requirements and considerations for granting or denying reinstatement applications. Therefore, the ISC fulfills its responsibility of guiding students through the status retention process by determining the most appropriate course(s) of action and outlining the necessary steps for retaining their F-1 status in the shortest time possible should they choose to continue studying at PCC.

Furthermore, The ISC uses its own internal reporting as a means for tracking F-1 out-of-status students because of the limitations in extracting reportable information from the SEVIS real-time interface, however ISSM will change this. Please see 'Out-of-Status Report, F13' which includes comparison from past academic terms, and 'Out-of-Status Workbook' for a look at reporting methodology. The analysis will focus specifically on the two most common reasons for incompliance, which are "Failure to enroll" and "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units" (please see attached for other, albeit rare reasons of non-compliance). While other record termination reasons such as "Authorized Early Withdrawal" and "Change of nonimmigrant Status" are also regularly monitored and recorded, an analysis of these along with collective out of status rates (i.e., compliance + incompliance) will be included in future Program Reviews.

Acceptable Target and Rationale:
Over the course of the last three and a half academic school years, the out of status rate for incompliant F-1 students has been between **3 and 4% annually**, which is roughly equal to about 50 F-1 students per academic term. It's important to note that all out of status rates are computed on a semester basis and that annual rates are computed by averaging the final result for each semester over the course of one academic school year. Then, the years are combined to compute one average, hence **approximately 3.8% over the three and a half year period**.

Also, the total number of F-1 students from which these rates are calculated are purposefully high due to the fact that all students expected to register in a new academic term must be included in the denominator in order to account for "Failure(s) to enroll," who otherwise are not recognized in IPRO reports. Please see 'FALL2013_Termination Report' for a detailed illustration of this point.

When analyzed from an SEVP reporting requirement standpoint, any number of SEVIS terminations for F-1 incompliance is acceptable as long as:

1) they are reported in an accurate and timely manner, and
2) the percentage of terminations in a particular term or entire school year is not unusually large relative to the F-1 student population (i.e., 30% at a school with 1000 F-1 students could be of concern to the DHS, while 30% at a school with 10 F-1 students may not be of concern to DHS).

Therefore, setting targets and rationale will be approached from an institutional perspective, through which useful operational insight can be derived.

As mentioned above, the out of status rate for incompliant F-1 students has been about 4% over the course of the last three full academic school years. When observing consistent/similar outcomes in organized sets of retroactive data, the first step is to accept the data upon verification and confirmation of its accuracy. The next step is to ask questions about deviations from the observable average. For example, in looking at the Distribution Summary for SPRING2011 in the 'Out-of-Status Report, F13', we see that both the total number and percentage of out of status is the lowest of the entire three year period. The person analyzing the data can then conduct further research to determine whether or not something unusual or 'special' occurred in that particular academic term which might have led to the final measure. When all factors and contextual variables are considered, it is at that very point where a decision must be made as to whether or not the causes of changes or outliers in the data are worth qualifying. Usually, there are a number of factors leading to the outcomes for out of status rates, such as "effective orientation (directly led) to lower percentage of new students going out of status" and/or "effective F-1 status workshop (directly led) to lower percentage of continuing students going out of status." These types of correlations are considered when designing surveys and other forms of outcome measurements.

When the person preparing the data has firsthand experience in a particular event or measurable period and is/was directly involved in the data collection procedures, more inferences can be drawn, and causes more readily realized. For example, Spring 2013 was going to have the lowest out of status for incompliance rates, particularly for "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units." However, there was an unforeseen change in academic scheduling that caused 22 F-1 students at PCC to become suddenly below 12 units for Spring 2013. Although the students were not responsible for the F-1 incompliance, we had to terminate their records by U.S. Immigration Law, and were therefore proactively complying with F-1 regulations. We then made sure that each of the 22 F-1 students either filed for Reinstatement if they were eligible or completed Reentry. Success rates varied per F-1 student SEVIS record, and this can be seen in the 'Out-of-Status Workbook'.

It must be noted that the campus-wide shift from the Legacy System to Banner in the second half of 2013 has allowed for the ISC to monitor and report on F-1 student enrollment more accurately and frequently. This is due to the fact that F-1 student enrollment reports are generated by IPRO on a daily basis in excel format. The previous method involved ordering paper reports from MIS every few weeks

throughout a semester and comparing the list to our database. This was very time consuming, and it is nowhere near as error proof as using sortable excel sheets for the enrollment list and ISC databases. In addition, the shift to Banner and LancerPoint has impacted student the registration process at large, thereby impacting the continuing F-1 student registration process.

In determining potential causes for why the F-1 out of status rates for incompliance jumped to 6.6% in Fall 2013, we must first clarify the timing difference(s) between "Failure to Enroll" and "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units." SEVIS terminations for failures to enroll occur within the first few weeks of the semester, in which continuing F-1 students are given until the Census Date or add/drop deadline to enroll. When they don't enroll for any units, and don't respond to ISC communications, they are terminated for "Failure to Enroll." On the other hand, SEVIS terminations for Unauthorized Drop below 12 units only occur when the add/drop deadline has passed and the F-1 student already has *some* units, but not enough to meet the 12 unit requirement, nor enough to meet their own authorized reduced course load requirement if applicable. Unlike for failure to enroll, terminations for unauthorized drop occur throughout the semester at any time, but especially during milestones (i.e., before the deadline to drop with a W). And it is the latter case of incompliance that is reflected in IPRO's daily F-1 enrollment reports, and one for which the ISC is perhaps more capable of mitigating than failure to enroll.

Given the information in the previous two paragraphs, there are a number of possibilities that might explain why the out of status rate jumped to 6.6% in Fall 2013. Ultimately, they revolve around the implementation of the new Banner and LancerPoint system:
- (continuing) F-1 students experienced difficulty in registering for classes on time
- Created complications for adding and dropping courses, particularly online
- Enrollment tracking became so accurate that enrollment numbers dropped*

Although these considerations may seem to reflect negatively on the implementation of Banner and LancerPoint system, they are actually not meant to argue against using the new system—it is quite the opposite. In fact, the use of Banner and IPRO reports has enabled the ISC to establish fail-proof precedents in tracking F-1 enrollment information. And **in order to have a better idea of how directly correlated the high out of status rates of Fall 2013 are to new system implementation, we either examine each TSICSRV record individually to gauge the level of registration difficulty per F-1 student, or we simply compare the outcome with that of Fall 2014 when it comes**. And by that time (Fall 2014), the ISC will have been using the new system for a year, and will have taken necessary initiative to reduce F-1 incompliance. Therefore, the answer to question implied in bold text is sufficiently summarized by "new system implementation." And this agrees with the general consensus for other departments on campus that "the new system is great, and it took a bit of getting used to."

*LancerPoint may or may not have anything to do with the high "Failure to Enroll" rate in Fall 2013.

Ideal Target and Rationale:
The F-1 out-of-status rate for incompliance can be lowered to **2%** by working on potentially separate but related fronts to reduce SEVIS terminations for both "Failure to Enroll" and "Unauthorized Drop below 12 Units." It all boils down to making sure that continuing F-1 students are motivated to complete their studies at PCC respective of their academic goals (i.e., AA/AS degree, AA/AS degree + transfer, etc.). And helping F-1 students to stay focused on what's important to their academic success is of utmost importance to the ISC.

Theoretically, if ISC is able to tackle the issue of F-1 unauthorized drops, then all that remain are failures to enroll. The latter phenomena is harder to control especially since F-1 students in this category have the propensity to leave the U.S. without first reporting/submitting departure notifications to the ISC, which is unfortunately not evident through SEVIS records. However, it is possible to impact F-1 students' decision regarding continuing studies at PCC with the goal of transferring by engaging them more often in academic and social contexts.

Relevant Documents:
'Out-of-Status Report, F13'
'Out-of-Status Workbook'
'FALL2013_Termination Report'

Key responsible personnel:
Amy Yan, Assistant Director
Reauna Wong, Senior Clerk
Nathasha Hong, Intermediate Clerk II
Ronny Dorian, Data Controller

Other Measures of External Accountability

All other SEVP reporting requirements
- Issuing Initial I-20s for new F-1 students and re-entering F-1 continuing students
- Issuing Continued Attendance I-20s for program-related changes and dependents
- Continuing and new student registration
- Updating personal and financial information
- Authorizing employment/training and reduced course loads
- Transferring out or completing of F-1 student records
- Reporting any data inconsistencies or necessary data fixes

I-17 Recertification

	The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) approved Pasadena City College's International Student Program for SEVIS recertification when it was last required in 2011. Recertification is required in 2014 and the ISC is confident that PCC will retain I-17 Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student due to ongoing compliance.