

New INS Regulations and the New School

by Andrew Gold

Following the enactment of post-9/11 modifications to the national immigration policies, international students should not expect any big differences in what they are required to do to maintain status, but school officials are nonetheless stressing that students should learn about the changes to head off potential problems.

“When you really learn what the changes [in data collection] are about, they’re not unreasonable. This is the same information as we collected before,” said Michael Hindi, director of International Student Services at the New School. “What I’m worried about is people doing what they have to do.”

Among the new policies are:

1) The school is now required to report changes in personal information or sta-

tus within 21 days, or 10 days for change of address, to the new Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which has taken over the functions of the abolished Immigration and Naturalization Services. The new department is a branch of the Department of Homeland Security.

2) All international students must obtain a new SEVIS I-20 or DS-2019 by August 1 or be in violation of the terms of their status. The main goal behind the policy changes is to keep the government with up-to-date information about students’ personal information and whereabouts. As opposed to sending information by mail, the new policies are requiring the school to report information by computer, which has required the school to abandon its established system for issuing new forms in favor of SEVIS, a quickly designed on-line system that still has many bugs and that has slowed work tremendously. The real time requirement is in part a response to the widely reported case of 9/11-hijacker Mohammed Atta, who was able to stay in the country while the INS processed his request for a change of status. Atta’s

