1) **What does the International Office do?**
   The mission of the International Office (IO) is to enrich the academic, research, and cultural experience of Northwestern’s international community. We advise and support you, advocate on your behalf, and increase the visibility of our international community while promoting educational and cultural exchange. One of the ways in which we achieve these goals is by navigating the various reporting requirements for our international students. We strive to proactively ensure our students remain in status as well as have access to those benefits that come with their status.

2) **Who does this technology fee pertain to?**
   All F and J visa holders whose immigration status is required to be reported by the University to the federal government.

3) **What is this fee?**
   This fee will pay for a new technology platform to streamline our federal reporting requirements.

4) **Why are international students required to pay the fee?**
   The software implementation and reporting requirements to the federal government are directly related to an international student’s status as a student visa holder. While students are responsible for their maintaining their status, we are responsible for reporting on that status. We have found many instances where students inadvertently violate their status. With our current technology, we are unable to catch and respond to these possible violations in a timely manner, thus jeopardizing your ability to remain in the U.S. or possibly return to the U.S.

5) **How long will the fee be assessed?**
   A technology fee will be assessed every year; although we anticipate lowering the fee amount after the implementation year. We will provide an end-of-year accounting.

6) **When will the fee be charged?**
   All international students are charged as they enroll in classes for the fall quarter. We work with Student Accounts to ensure that students are enrolled when they are assessed the fee.

7) **What if I don’t attend classes in the fall?**
   The fee will be assessed in the first quarter of the 2018-2019 academic year in which you are enrolled in classes.

8) **What if I graduate in the fall?**
   The fee is an annual fee regardless of how many quarters you are enrolled.

9) **Do students on OPT/STEM OPT pay the fee?**
   Only F and J visa holders enrolled in courses will be assessed the fee.

10) **Are international postdoctoral fellows also subject to this fee?**
    Postdoctoral fellows are generally J scholars, not students, and are not part of the initial implementation.

11) **Who is responsible for paying this fee: the individual student, the program, or the school?**
    The individual student is responsible for this fee.

12) **Can my department or adviser subsidize me for this fee?**
    Yes. Please speak with your department or adviser to determine if this is a possibility.
13) How were international students notified about this fee?
Via email, our website and listserv messages.

14) Why are we just now learning about this fee right before it is due?
While the IO has been working on researching and proposing this fee for over a year, the approval from the Provost came in May and the contract was signed in June. After additional time to work with Student Accounts and the Registrar’s office to determine how to assess the fee, we sent notifications to all impacted students as soon as we could.

15) Are academic advisers aware of this fee?
The Provost and the IO sent information to the departments and schools in May. We will be continuing the conversation with the campus community.

16) How does this fee support the University’s vision to provide a diverse, inclusive and welcoming environment for all Northwestern community members?
We strive to provide a welcoming environment by working as advocate for our international students through education, notification of potential problems and pitfalls, advising on the shifting landscape, and assisting with issues related to your status.

In order for Northwestern to remain certified by the Department of Homeland Security to accept F and J students, we must comply with the federal reporting regulations. We balance our responsibility to accurately report to the DHS with our belief that we are obligated to provide timely and proactive support to our students. This new system will allow us to better support our students while meeting our reporting requirements. We believe being able to support our international students directly provides a diverse and inclusive campus.

17) What is the new platform?
In the Higher Education SEVIS reporting field, there are two primary competitors. After extensive research, the IO determined that Terra Dotta’s ISSS platform will provide the best service for our needs.

18) How will the new platform affect me?
There is a student and department portal in the new system. Almost all current requests to the IO will be processed through the portal. This will allow us to:

• Dramatically decrease paper requests
• Provide shorter response times for your requests
• Route your requests to another adviser when your adviser is out of the office
• Provide more education regarding regulatory and compliance issues
• Provide more consistent communication to all students
• Manage workload and communications more effectively to ensure better service
• Continue to develop the software with the Terra Dotta team to improve our service, including providing tracking of requests

19) When will it launch?
The new platform should be fully ready to launch summer 2019. We expect a soft launch in spring 2019 quarter particularly focused on OPT and CPT applications.

20) Who should I go to with questions about this fee?
The International Office welcomes your comments. We are compiling all of them. You can send them to us at intoff@northwestern.edu and/or JenZabel@northwestern.edu.