



Leaders in International Higher Education

2023 Annual Conference

Institutional Approaches to Hosting At-Risk Scholars

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Goals

- Look at the context of hosting threatened scholars in North America
- Investigate the obstacles and challenges higher education institutions face in hosting
- Explore some approaches, practices, and resources that can support these efforts
- Establish supportive relationships

Institutional Approaches to Hosting At-Risk Scholars

Outline

- **Viviana Fernandez**, University of Ottawa
Scene setting
- **Anne McCall**, Xavier University of Louisiana
Institutional obstacles
- **Kathryn Libal**, University of Connecticut
Getting started
- **Diana Chigas**, Tufts University
Joining forces

How to Get Started Hosting

- Build a **multi-disciplinary cross-university team** including faculty, administration, and specialists for legal, health, and housing issues
- Consider your **context** – rural vs. urban, access to transportation, quality of health coverage, cost of housing
- Secure **commitments** for salary/stipends, housing, etc.
- **Stability matters**: Consider hosting for 1-2 years
- Develop and sustain **relationships with upper administrators** to secure ongoing support; this work is often relatively “invisible” within the university so such communication is key

How to Get Started Hosting

- Select a fellow through **shared review process**
- After selection, **form a team** for mentorship, liaising, facilitating community inclusion; identify a “leader” or “co-leader”
- Include a **staff member** with primary responsibility for assisting with visa questions, hiring processes, selecting benefits, and trouble shooting once the SAR fellow is in residence (e.g., accessing health benefits can be a particular challenge)
- **Mentor team** could include one or more faculty for research and teaching
- Consider **partnering with a local community group** who shares common interests with the SAR fellow to build community

Making Hosting Work

- Assess SAR fellow's **interest and capacity to teach** alongside a current research agenda
- **Co-teaching** promising practice as the SAR fellow acclimates to the new university setting
- **Do not overload** with teaching responsibilities if at all possible, especially in the first year
- Provide access to **teaching workshops and training** for use of digital platforms for curriculum through centers for excellence in teaching
- When possible assign a graduate assistant or staff member to **assist in development** of digital course platform

Making Hosting Work

- Identify a **home department** office space where faculty are often present
- Include the SAR fellow in **faculty meetings**
- Identify **faculty interest/research groups** that may foster community
- Help join **national associations** (covering fees) & provide travel budget on par with other faculty
- Encourage to **present to faculty and/or students** in the first semester to help build awareness of the SAR fellow's presence on campus
- Reach out to **neighboring universities/colleges** to foster connections

Strengthening Opportunities Post-Residency

- Begin talking about the SAR fellow's **preparation for next steps professionally** early in residency
- Help access language courses, apply for other higher education programs, apply for post-doctoral research positions, or other academic faculty positions
- Work on cover letters, CV, publications in English, teaching, research and DEI statements

Anticipating Challenges

- Issues related to **status** – Visa renewals, asylum processes
- Grappling with **isolation or effects of displacement** – offering appropriate health and mental health services or community connections
- Providing supports for accompanying **family members in residence** (child care, educational access, health supports, etc.)
- Transportation

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Thank You / Discussion

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