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
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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

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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