

Issues Involved In Hosting Scholars at Risk

Making the Argument to the University Administration

Addressing Institutional Needs

Curricular

- Opportunity to cover areas and disciplines that are not often taught

- Opportunity to extend curricular emphasis in areas that are of emerging interest

Pedagogical

- Opportunity to expose students to experts who have a wealth of unique experiences

Cost-effectiveness

- In many cases hosting a scholar requires little more of an institutional commitment than the hiring of adjuncts or contingency faculty

Ethical Considerations

Presence of a Scholar at Risk on campus can assist in reasserting core values of academic freedom that are shared within the academy.

Presence of a Scholar at Risk promotes service obligations of the institution to the greater external community.

Importance of Involving the Entire Campus in the Hosting Process

- Soliciting support from different departments crucial
- Ensuring that others apart from the Campus SAR representative can assist the scholar is vital.
- Ensuring that the scholar's presence is visible and public; offering opportunities for the scholar to give lectures, classroom visitations, local radio and newspaper interviews is extremely important
- At Illinois Wesleyan University, our scholars have participated in events such as the Annual Hunger Banquet, African Culture Week, the Social Science Colloquium and International Studies Colloquium Series.
- Involving scholar with informal meetings, dinners, pot-lucks is necessary.
- Involving scholar with formal university ceremonies including convocations, graduations, honors ceremonies extremely important.

Addressing the Scholars' Needs

- Have scholar visit campus before contract begins
- Assistance with personal issues including family separation, transportation, housing, legal issues is crucial
- Make sure that scholar not only has suitable housing but has necessary supplies including bedding, television, radio, etc.
- Clarity with regard to contract, limits to which the institution will be able to provide assistance, help in securing a more permanent position extremely important.
- Assist scholar in meeting other Scholars at Risk within the region and country.
- Particular and unique strengths of the scholar must be affirmed. Some scholars will be interested in political advocacy; others, research; others, teaching. Space must be made available for scholars to pursue their specific interests.
- Take advantage of collegiality of peers; find individuals at the department, division, university level who can willingly help.
- Make sure that scholar understands the culture and ethos of your institution: public, private, small, large, liberal arts, comprehensive, teaching vs. research oriented

Challenges

- Make sure that scholar is not exoticized; no pressure should be placed upon the scholar to tell her/his story. Avoid depicting one's personal biography in overly sensational terms.
- Personal considerations may clash with professional demands: ensuring one's safety, confronting separation from family and friends, negotiating one's future are severe challenges that scholars will be forced to confront.
- The difficulty of entering the professoriate on a permanent basis should not be underestimated. Thus the temporal nature of scholar rescue is an inevitable problem. How long can or should an institution give assistance? What obligations does the institution have to other Scholars at Risk seeking assistance?
- Involving the entire campus not only in scholar rescue but in other forms of academic freedom advocacy can be a challenge, yet is essential if the process of hosting a scholar is put into appropriate context