Building Inclusive Approaches to Campus Internationalization:
Integrating Displaced Students to the Logic of Campus Internationalization

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Framing the conversation. Leading Inclusive Internationalization Processes

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Displaced Students. Who are they?

• Refugee:
  Someone who is fleeing his/her country because of persecution, war, or violence. There must be well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. This category is protected by international law (Geneva Convention 1951 and expanded with the 1967 Protocol).

• Internally-Displaced People:
  People forced to flee their homes but never cross an international border.

• Stateless People:
  Someone who is not a citizen of any country. A person can become stateless due to a variety of reasons, including sovereign, legal, technical or administrative decisions or oversights.
Displaced Students. Who are they?

• **Asylum Seekers:**
  People who flee their own country and seek sanctuary in another country. In the U.S., an applicant must:
  - Meet the definition of refugee
  - Be already in the United States or seeking admission to the U.S.

• **Immigrant:**
  Students who were born in a foreign country and moved to the U.S. prior to college

• **International Student Status (F-1):**
  Students who join U.S. higher education because there are no possibilities to study in his/her country.
International Law

- The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) – focused on Europe
- 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees – expands timeframe and geography
- The 1967 Declaration on Territorial Asylum
65.6 million forcibly displaced people worldwide

Refugees 22.5 million
17.2 million under UNHCR mandate
5.3 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA

Stateless people 10 million

Refugees resettled 189,300 in 2016

Source: http://www.unhcr.org
In Numbers

Where the world’s displaced people are being hosted:
- Americas: 16%
- Asia and Pacific: 11%
- Europe: 17%
- Middle East and North Africa: 26%
- Africa: 30%

55% of refugees worldwide came from three countries:
- South Sudan: 1.4m
- Afghanistan: 2.5m
- Syria: 5.5m

Top hosting countries:
- Ethiopia: 791,600
- Uganda: 940,800
- Islamic Republic of Iran: 979,400
- Lebanon: 1.0m
- Pakistan: 1.4m
- Turkey: 2.9m

Source: http://www.unhcr.org
In 2016, the average asylum approval rate was 47% for affirmative asylum petitions and 48% for defensive asylum cases in the Immigration Courts.

In 2017, the USA reduced the refugee cap to 50,000. This cap was met in July 12, 2017. After that date, only people who could prove existing family connections (immediate family) in the U.S. were eligible to come.

84,989 persons were admitted to the United States as refugees in Fiscal Year 2016.

20,455 individuals were granted asylum in Fiscal Year 2016.
In Numbers - U.S. Colleges

Source: IIE Open Doors Data 2013-2017
The Crisis

Unable to quantify (access to statistics is difficult)

Moral imperative to educate displaced populations (completion of lower studies, protection, reconstruction)

The impact is long-reaching:

- **High concentration**
  Large group of displaced populations without proper services (Turkey, Pakistan, Jordan, Lebanon)

- **Access**
  Roughly 50% of displaced children have no school to attend (UNHCR)
  Only 1% of refugee youth are able to access higher education (UNCHR) (vs. 41% OECD countries; vs. 8.7% in Afghanistan).

- **Lost generation?**
  Prior to the Syrian war, 26% of the young population from urban areas attended a university, 16% from rural areas)
The Crisis

- **Gender Gap**
  Syrian women are less likely to enroll in higher education institutions

- **Academic displacement**
  Half (50%) of Syrian professors and more than 150,000 students have fled

- **Lack of documents**
  Academic records and certificates to continue education
What does the Literature Say?

Three Themes:

• Education
• Family
• English Language
What does the Literature Say?

**Education**

Immigrant’s prior education when they enter the U.S. plays a large role in the subsequent education attainment of their children

Baum, S., Flores, S. (2011)

Even when education level is low, refugees strengthen their educational aspirations in the host country; typically informed by the pre-immigration experience and the value attached to education in the host country.

Sometimes lack of access to information and “how the system works” can prevent students from making right decisions for preparing adequately to higher ed.

What does the Literature Say?

Education

First and second generation immigrations have 4-year college enrollment rates at least as high as, and generally higher than native high school graduates of the same ethnicity. 
Baum, S., Flores, S. (2011)

Trauma from past experiences, which may include war, violence, refugee campus and the resettlement process may cause students to become distrustful or fearful of people in authority.


Factors associated with students drop-out:

• Self-perception of academic ability (House, 2001)
• Antisocial behavior and rejection by peers (French and Conrad, 2001)
• Lack of academic and psychological preparation before coming to the U.S. (Rong & Preissle, 1998)
What does the Literature Say?

**Family**
Students quickly find themselves in reversed roles, where they help adults navigate the new culture.


Students with family obligations are more likely to find it difficult to piece together adequate funds without working excessive hours interfere with their studies.

Baum, S., Flores, S. (2011)

In case of Mexican immigrants, parental preference for children may determine that children do not pursue higher education, because they do not want their children to leave the house.

Undocumented students (and students whose parents are undocumented) will face the highest hurdles to higher education due to higher tuition fees (non-resident) and ineligibility to financial aid.

Baum, S., Flores, S. (2011)
What does the Literature Say?

Family

Parents are not always available to provide emotional support, because themselves have gone through challenging experiences.

Ascher,. (1995)

Interpretation of parental involvement in education may differ in various populations and urgent needs of economic survival may hinder parental involvement. School may view this behavior a lack of interest in students’ education.

Blakely,. (1993)

Dissonant acculturation

Rumbaut and Portes,. (2001)
What does the Literature Say?

English as means of integration

Language barriers is serious challenge with possible negative impact on education. This may also be a barrier for following college admission processes.


ESL programs are safe spaces where it is OK to have an accent or wear different clothing.

(Birman, 2001)

Quick English courses might have negative impact on the process of acculturation. Easy to draw mistaken conclusions on cultural cues

(Trueba, 1990)

Other Themes

• Stereotypes, stigma and discrimination
• Experience of Muslim Students
What does the Literature Say?

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Value of Education

Sometimes lack of access to information and "how the system works" can prevent students from making right decisions for preparing adequately to higher ed.


Multiple Approaches to Student Support

- Positive teachers
- Parental Support
- Refugee peer support
- Welcoming refugee youth center

(McBrien, 2005)

Help the campus at large and professors in particular, understand the multiple experiences that students bring to the college.

De-politicize the term “refugees” and highlight its human side
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From UARRM

• 28% of institutions have policies designed for refugee/at-risk students - U.S. survey through the AIEA listserv
• Some universities offer pro-bono legal support (Penn State) and other make referrals to professional services
• 70% of AIEA members are involved in some type of advocacy (e.g., by signing petitions or by sending joint letters to Congress).
• 58% said their University is involved in research that has impacted or could impact public perception of migrants and/or refugees (e.g., by demonstrating social or economic contributions of migrants)

What is happening in the U.S.?
What is happening in the U.S.?

HEIs Reaching Out

- South New Hampshire University delivers education and awards degree in refugee camps, in partnership with local NGO
- Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL) providing access to higher education to communities in conflict or forced displacement

Relevant Groups

- No Lost Generation (NLG), a student-led campus advocacy network, raises community awareness about forced migration-related issues - http://nolostgeneration.org/
- University Alliance for Refugees and At-Risk Migrants (UARRM)
- IIE’s Syria Consortium. A network of 40 U.S. universities + foreign institutions + member associations
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The decision to receive displaced students should be deliberate and permeate the whole institution

At the Admission Point

• Flexible admission protocols should be in place for students who cannot provide adequate credentials and documents:
  • Alternative evaluation of foreign credentials (background paper, portfolio, sworn statements, witness statements)
  • Assessment of competencies (skills, examinations, interviews, sample work, special projects)
• Admission forms in languages other than English?
• How to identify those students? Ask for voluntary self-disclosure, look at previous edu records
• In-house ways for assessing student’s English proficiency
• Provide funding (the more, the merrier) – hopefully full-funding that guarantees completion of
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Recommendations for Inclusive Internationalization

On Campus

• Proactively integrate displaced students to international orientation (even if only the social aspects) to help build communities
• Intervene early to identify potential gaps in the learning
• Provide on-going ESL support
• Train counseling staff on the experiences that displaced students bring to the campus (for effective intervention)
• “Humanize” the students’ experience by creating a positive environment
  • reach out to professors/employers
  • stories in student-run newspaper
  • stories in the local paper
• be ready to publicly advocate for the presence of these students on campus
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- Develop incremental steps toward a degree (associate, bachelor, etc.)
- Integrate parents in campus events (where feasible and appropriate)
- Foster leadership opportunities where displaced students have a voice and prominent role
- Connect early on the students with career services & campus employment
- Serve as advocate for the student when needed
- Create events that address global issues where displaced students serving as resources
- Prepare ISS team with technical knowledge on immigration changes (F1 - TPS / F1-Asylum)
- Faculty may invite displaced students to share perspectives in his/her classroom
- Continuously review the campus experience for all students by integrating contact with international groups in the community as part of the formal curriculum, guest lectures, educational activities or part of the extracurricular activities.
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THANK YOU
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What are the most salient challenges for Higher Education Institutions to work with displaced students? (i.e. socio-economic, political and cultural factors)

Reflection # 1
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What recommendations do you have for HEIs to provide better services to displaced students?

Reflection # 2