

INTEGRATION OF FOREIGN-BORN FACULTY IN ACADEMIA: FOREIGNNESS AS AN ASSET*

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Abstract

Each year, the U.S. invites thousands of foreign-born and foreign-educated professionals as immigrants and on temporary visas, including academicians. In some academic programs such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, these foreign-born professionals represent an imposing mass, while in others, they are relatively invisible. This review of literature explored issues of obstacles and opportunities for foreign-born faculty to become fully integrated in academia, particularly in programs that do not traditionally attract international scholars. In addition to the literature review, e-mail and telephone interviews were conducted with a group of eight foreign-born faculty and administrators to further explore the role of foreign-born faculty in internationalizing and globalizing U.S. campuses. Recommendations are offered for a) institutions of higher education to alleviate the insularity of their campuses and for b) the foreign-born faculty themselves to use their foreignness as an asset.

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2 Sumario en español

Cada año, EEUU invita miles de a profesionales extranjero-nacidos y extranjero-cultos como inmigrantes y en visas temporarias, inclusive académicos. En algunos programas académicos como la ciencia, la tecnología, dirigiendo y las matemáticas, estos profesionales extranjero-nacidos representan una imponente masa, mientras en otros, ellos son relativamente invisibles. Esta revisión de la literatura exploró asuntos de obstáculos y oportunidades para la facultad extranjero-nacido para llegar a ser completamente integrado en la academia, especialmente en programas que no atrae a eruditos tradicionalmente internacionales. Además de la revisión de la literatura, correo electrónico y entrevistas telefónicas fueron realizados con un grupo de ocho facultad y administradores extranjero-nacidos para explorar aún más el papel de facultad extranjero-nacido en internacionalizar y globalizar campus de EEUU. Las recomendaciones son ofrecidas para un) instituciones de educación superior aliviar la estrechez de sus campus y para B) la facultad extranjero-nacido sí mismos utilizar su extranjería como una ventaja.

NOTE: Esta es una traducción por computadora de la página web original. Se suministra como información general y no debe considerarse completa ni exacta.

3 Introduction

Through such federal policies as the Immigration Act of 1990, each year, the U.S. invites thousands of foreign-born and foreign-educated professionals as immigrants or on temporary exchange visas. In some academic programs such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, these foreign-born professionals represent an imposing mass. In 2001, according to the Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology, 38.0% of engineering faculty members in U.S. institutions of higher education were foreign-born, as were 35% of medical scientists, including faculty, and 29.2% of mathematical science faculty (Lowell, Babco, & Ellis, 2010). These statistics are hardly surprising. After all, foreign-born scientists receive advanced degrees in higher proportion than their native-born counterparts. For example, 57.5% of all doctoral degrees and 45.9% of all master's degrees awarded in electrical engineering in 2003 were received by foreign-born scientists (National Science Board, 2010). Below is a list of disciplines in which foreign born scientists received more than 40% of master's or doctorates in 2003 (Table 1).

With this high proportion of faculty members and professionals with highest degrees in science and technology, there does not seem to be room to question why some researchers (for example, Mosisa, 2002) have hailed the positive impact of a foreign-born workforce on the U.S. economy. According to the Immigration Policy Center (Paral & Johnson, 2004), foreign-born scientists are not only prominent among the most famous scientists in the United States; they are also indispensable to the U.S. science and engineering workforce as a whole.

Foreign-Born Proportion of Individuals with Master's and Doctoral Degrees in Science and

Engineering, by Field: 2003

Field	All Degree Levels	Master's	Doctorate
All Science and Engineering	18.8	27.2	34.6
Computer Sciences	29.9	46.5	57.4
Mathematics	18.5	25.5	43.1
Chemistry	25.3	42.1	37.0
Physics/Astronomy	32.6	34.4	40.1
Aerospace/Aeronautical/Astronautical Engineering	16.4	29.6	52.6
Chemical Engineering	26.0	49.4	47.0
Civil Engineering	24.9	39.3	54.2
Electrical Engineering	34.1	45.9	57.5
Industrial Engineering	21.5	33.1	42.0
Mechanical Engineering	23.0	34.3	52.2

Table 1

Source: National Science Board. Science and Engineering Indicators 2010. Table 3-24.

However, for the rest of foreign-born professionals, the road to integration and recognition in the academy remains elusive. For instance, although foreign-born faculty account for overwhelmingly high proportions of all science and engineering faculty positions at U.S. universities and “have higher levels of productivity,” they experience lower levels of work satisfaction and lower salaries than their U.S. born peers (Corley & Sabharwal, 2007, p. 935). According to Collins (2008), foreign-born faculty face challenges on U.S. campuses that include difficult relations with students, feelings of loneliness and, for those seeking permanent immigration into the U.S., the legal and cultural difficulties associated with the process of resettling in a foreign land. Similarly, Alberts (2008) studied foreign-born faculty members’ adjustment to different academic standards and grading systems. With Collins (2008) and Theobald (2008), Alberts emphasized both formal and informal constraints that prevent foreign-born faculty from realizing their full potential and the positive impact they could have in academia if they were effectively supported.

Despite these constraints, foreign-born academics may still represent an invaluable asset for U.S. institutions of higher education in their internationalization and globalization endeavors. According to research by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars and the Institute of International Education (O’Hara, 2006), “U.S. scholars are more insular than their colleagues abroad” (p. 42). Thanks to the presence of scholars from overseas, O’Hara argued, “U.S. institutions, research programs, scholars and students benefit significantly from the perspectives, research methods and skills visiting scholars bring” (p. 41). The question remains whether these visiting scholars and other foreign-born and foreign-educated scholars are provided with enough support and recognition to become bona-fide faculty who can effectively advance the internationalization and globalization change process on U.S. campuses. According to O’Hara, the contributions and effectiveness of faculty in advancing both the international awareness and multiculturalism on U.S. campuses can be grouped in three areas:

- 1) Faculty influence students and shape future generations of leaders through teaching and mentoring;
- 2) Faculty bring international perspectives into their research and often establish long-lasting connections between their U.S. home institution and their partners abroad; and
- 3) Faculty share their knowledge and experience with the wider campus community and the community at large. (O’Hara, 2009, p. 38)

The purpose of this paper is to review literature on obstacles and opportunities for professionals born and educated outside the U.S. to contribute to the internationalization and globalization of the higher education in U.S., with the emphasis on programs, such as education, where they are under-represented or under-reported. To what extent can they become effective in accomplishing the three roles identified above? In addition to the review of the literature, a summary of e-mail conversations and interviews with eight foreign-born faculty and administrators is provided to illustrate their conditions and perceptions about their effectiveness in academia. If, indeed, foreign-born faculty can help U.S. universities in their internationalization and globalization efforts (Alberts, 2008), it appears necessary to explore issues of the foreign-born faculty's perceptions of the U.S. educational system, their assessment of their own intercultural effectiveness, and the challenges they face legally and professionally.

4 Who Are Foreign-Born Faculty?

4.1 Dearth of Information on Foreign-Born Faculty in Institutional Internal Reports

For the general population, in 2009, there were 38.5 million foreign-born people in the U.S. (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2010). As defined by the U.S. Bureau of Census, "the foreign-born population includes anyone who was not a U.S. citizen at birth, including those who have become U.S. citizens through naturalization" (Grieco & Trevelyan, 2010, p. 1). But the number of these individuals who were employed in higher education institutions, collectively and individually, can only be estimated. Except in specialized reports by such organizations as the National Science Foundation or the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the numbers of foreign-born faculty, outside of science and technology, are under-reported. Institutional fact-books and other internal reports are not "required" to highlight if academics are foreign-born. Because academic institutions tend to report residency, rather than country of birth, the number of foreign-born academicians is not well tracked in non-science disciplines such as education. In its *Open Doors* reports on international exchanges in academia, the United States bases its statistics on residency (Institute of International Education, 2010). International students and faculty are those who are not citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) does similar reporting; its ethnic and racial report about full-time instructional faculty in degree-granting institutions recounts seven major categories—White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Unknown race/ethnicity, and "non-resident aliens" (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). The closest to foreign-born faculty in NCES classification is "non-resident aliens." Based on its 2008 report, there were 31,222 non-resident faculty members in U.S. degree-granting institutions in 2007, representing 4.4% of the 703,463 faculty. These numbers do not represent the many academics born outside the U.S. who may have become U.S. citizens through naturalization, or are in the process of permanently migrating to the U.S.

4.2 Foreign-Born Professionals with Advanced Degrees: South-East Asia vs. the Rest of the World

To better understand who is foreign-born in the academy, it seemed necessary to point to the disproportionate nature of the foreign-born population as part of the U.S. labor force. To start with, the foreign-born population is a complex group. Among the persons aged 25 and older residing in U.S., foreign-born individuals make up only 15.9%. However, according to the 2008 American Community Survey, this group accounts for the majority of adults with less than 9th grade education (52.4%) (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). As Table 2 shows, these statistics are disproportionally represented among the different countries of origin of the foreign-born populations.

2008 U.S. Civilian Labor Force 25 Years of Age and Older by Educational Attainment and

Region of Birth*

Total	Total	Less than 9th Grade	Advanced Degrees
Native Born	168,115,947	6,095,430	16,796,005
Foreign-Born	31,901,743	6,717,745	3,519,014
Total	200,017,690	12,813,175	20,315,019
Mexico	9,155,743	3,797,155	126,218
Caribbean	2,984,123	443,835	194,625
Central America	2,303,388	773,334	62,991
South America	2,140,562	227,575	221,351
Total Latin America	16,583,816	5,241,899	605,185
South and East Asia	7,829,877	771,104	1,581,767
Middle East	1,137,629	99,036	228,083
All Other	6,350,276	505,706	1,103,979
Percent Distribution			
Native Born	84.1	47.6	82.7
Foreign-Born	15.9	52.4	17.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mexico	4.6	29.6	0.6
Caribbean	1.5	3.5	1.0
Central America	1.2	6.0	0.3
South America	1.1	1.8	1.1
Total Latin America	8.3	40.9	3.0
South and East Asia	3.9	6.0	7.8
Middle East	0.6	0.8	1.1
All Other	3.2	3.9	5.4

Table 2

Source: Pew Hispanic Center. 2008 American Community Survey

Note. *Individuals with more than 9th Grade Education, but with Bachelors' degrees or less, are not included in this table.

By themselves, individuals born in Latin America—that is, Mexico, Caribbean, Central America, South America—while accounting for only 8.3% of U.S. residents (U.S. native and foreign-born combined) aged 25 and older, make up 40.9% of people with less than 9th grade education, and only 3% of those with

advanced degrees. This sharp contrast is no less evident than among residents of Mexican descent, who, while representing 4.6% of people 25 years of age and older living in the U.S., make up close to 30% of the people with less than a 9th grade education, but less than 1% of people with advanced degrees.

Table 3 further highlights the discrepancies within the foreign-born population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). Not only is the majority of foreign-born persons 25 years of age and older from Latin America, but this group comprises nearly 80% of those with less than 9th grade education, and a mere 17% of foreign-born with advanced degrees.

Percent Distribution of Foreign-Born Civilian Labor force by Educational Attainment, 2008

Total	Total	Less than 9th Grade	Advanced Degrees
Foreign-Born	31,901,743	6,717,745	3,519,014
Percent Distribution			
Mexico	28.7	56.5	3.6
Caribbean	9.4	6.6	5.5
Central America	7.2	11.5	1.8
South America	6.7	3.4	6.3
Total Latin America	52.0	78.0	17.2
South and East Asia	24.5	11.5	44.9
Middle East	3.6	1.5	6.5
All Other	19.9	7.5	31.4

Table 3

Source: Pew Hispanic Center. 2008 American Community Survey

As such, when literature discusses foreign-born faculty, it is likely that the focus is on individuals from South and East Asia, as well as from the Middle East. A staggering 44.9% of foreign born individuals with advanced degrees are from South and East Asia. Only 11.5% of foreign-born individuals with less than a 9th grade education are from that region.

5 An Invisible Minority on Campuses

As discussed previously accurate numbers of foreign-born professionals employed in U.S. institutions of higher education are not easy to find. Outside the field of science and technology, one can only rely on broad estimates of overall labor statistics such as the ones collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Still, based on estimates, the following observations can be made. First, from the American Community Survey (Tables 2 and 3), one observes that the majority of foreign-born people with master's, professional and doctoral degrees are from Asia and the Middle East. Second, 3.5% of an estimated 21,608,000 foreign-born persons 16 years and older, or 756,308, are employed in education, training and library occupations (Bureau of Labors Statistics, 2009). However, overall, except in geography (Collins, 2008; Foote, Li, Monk & Theobald, 2008) and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), which keep track of foreign-born faculty and students, very little is reported on foreign-born professionals in academia.

The issue, it seems, is not about the representation of foreign-born faculty in institutional reports, per se, but whether they are integrated into the human capital of colleges and universities, especially during their first years. How else could these faculty members influence the internationalization process, the students,

and the community if they are not integrated into the fabrics of universities? Being a faculty member at the college level, particularly in a U.S. college or university, is a journey full of challenges and opportunities. From a programmatic perspective, foreign-born and foreign-educated academics bring with them a heavy baggage of not only being born and raised in another culture, but also of limited familiarity with the U.S. higher education system. For Collins (2008), this baggage may make it difficult for foreign-born faculty to relate to students or instructional contents. However, the same baggage may offer additional resources to colleges and departments intent on connecting with the world where they recruit international students or send their own students and faculty. For this reason alone, an awareness of how many foreign-born academics exist on campus would help program coordinators in assessing their programmatic needs.

However, in many cases, as Foote, Li, Monk and Theobald (2008) reported, foreign-born academics have become a vulnerable group, faced with problems that on-campus support and networking mechanisms rarely address. According to the researchers, programs created to support new faculty are seldom tailored to the particular challenges facing foreign-born faculty, including cultural and legal issues they confront each day. Indeed, foreign-born faculty members' problems transcend the traditional classification of minority faculty into Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaska Native, and non-resident alien. It seems that to effectively integrate the foreign-born academics on U.S. campuses, colleges and universities should look beyond the confines of current classifications.

6 Institutional Barriers to Integration of Foreign-Born Faculty

Can a college or university meet its quota of minority positions, as required by Affirmative Action policies, by hiring a foreign-born individual from the same minority background? In a case reported by Wilson (2001), the hiring of foreign-born faculty professors and administrators was decried with issues of favoritism, primarily because they were hired in positions out of which their native-born counterparts were demoted. As such, even if the hiring of the foreign-born professionals was based on merit, it could nonetheless exacerbate the relations between the establishment and native-born minorities. Consequently, the unfortunate situation sets up the foreign-born against native-born minority members.

To address this issue, one must address the perception that foreign-born professionals take away rights from their native-born counterparts, instead of being a necessary force in the globalization of U.S. campuses. More importantly, does the presence of foreign-born faculty on campuses over-inflate the representation of traditional native-born minority groups, and therefore jeopardize affirmative action discussions? As Tapia (2007) advocated,

6.1

The presence of foreign scholars—even those who are black, brown, or Spanish-speaking—does little to solve the problem of our universities' lack of success with Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and black youth from across the United States. Foreigners should not count when we are talking about underrepresentation of American groups. (http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html² . 3rd paragraph from end)

Although the terms “*foreign-born*” and “*foreign*” are not interchangeable, it appears, in Tapia's context, that he meant more than foreigners. In fact, the rest of his argument appears to be directed at foreign-born and foreign-educated faculty and students. He explained,

6.2

But those foreign students and faculty members have not experienced anything like the hardships that members of domestic-minority groups have faced year after year. They were not viewed as racially or ethnically different in their countries of origin and, from their formative years on, made to feel that they were second-class citizens who did not belong in higher education or in leadership positions. People from places like Africa,

²http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html

Spain, or Latin America cannot be effective role models or mentors for African-Americans and Latinos who grew up in the United States. (http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html³ . 4th paragraph from end)

Arguably, the last part of this argument is a very harsh proposition. First of all, Tapia’s definition of “role model” seems questionable. Although this statement does not differentiate between international students and faculty on visitors’ visas and foreign-born immigrants, one could ask whether students relate only to political role models, or can they also look up to academic authority figures? Even Tapia acknowledges that beyond the political argument about obscuring the affirmative action discussion, foreign-born faculty have academic merits. Tapia conceded, “International students and scholars contribute significantly to the high quality of American colleges and universities, and to the nation’s economy. We should continue to welcome the best talent from around the world” (http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html⁴ . 5th paragraph from end). Therefore, the issue may not be that foreign-born faculty members are a threat to traditional minority representation. However, the risk of using them as scapegoats in discussion over the politics of education is not a healthy situation. Foreign-born faculty may have talents to contribute to the educational system, but if they are set up against traditional minority groups, their academic and social resettlement will be very difficult.

Researchers also contend that the race and “equity” issues may be secondary to, although inseparable with, the more complex concept of self-identity and job satisfaction. For instance, is it coincidental or intentional that foreign-born scientists hold lower level faculty positions, have lower levels of job satisfaction, and have lower salaries (Corley & Sabharwal, 2007)? Notably, Corley and Sabharwal (2007) reported that “the areas in which the foreign-born scientists lagged the most behind U.S.-born scientists were in levels of satisfaction with salary, level of responsibility, job security, and intellectual challenge” (p. 935).

Other researchers have reported that foreign-born scholars perceived a sense of rejection from their colleagues, that their skills and abilities were underused, and that campus communities were insensitive to their cultures (for example, Howe, 2008). Similarly, foreign-born faculty, because they come to the U.S. with already formed world views, often report stress related to cultural differences, especially in areas of social and professional relationships, religious beliefs, and educational practices and discourses (for example, Collins, 2008). In particular, Collins (2008) reported that the majority of foreign-born faculty members indicated being lonely on campus, and that the administration did not assist them. Collins recommended that departments and support programs provide mentoring and networking opportunities for foreign-born faculty so they can cope with loneliness and adjust to the academic environment.

7 Foreign-Born Faculty as Assets in the Internationalization and Globalization Process

In their study of barriers to faculty’s involvement in international education at the University of Oregon, Dewey and Duff (2009) identified five main barriers at the University of Oregon, which can be generalized to other institutions:

7.1

First, there is a general lack of coordination and information available regarding engagement in international initiatives. Second, many constraints exist due to limited funding availability for international work. Third, numerous administrative policies and procedures exist that serve as disincentives to participation in international initiatives. Fourth, there is a lack of support staff and personnel to facilitate international initiatives. (p. 496)

At institutions with a presence of foreign-born and international scholars, one quick, yet inconsequential, solution to these constraints, seems to shift the burden. Rather than strategically planning their globalization and internationalization activities, such institutions simply expect their foreign-born and international faculty

³http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html

⁴http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html

to serve as internationalizing agents. Lim (2001) cautioned that foreign-born faculty and students, whether immigrants or on visitor visas, cannot, by themselves, internationalize U.S. campuses. Indeed, for colleges and universities to depend on those scholars alone for the globalization of their programs would be too limiting. The presence of foreign-born scholars on U.S. campuses can only serve a purpose to the extent that campuses deliberately take proactive action to incorporate globalization and internationalization in their strategic planning (Theobald, 2008).

8 Intercultural Effectiveness of Foreign-Born Faculty

The last issue is concerned with whether foreign-born professors, administrators and teaching assistants can be inter-culturally effective in the U.S. academic system. Can they effectively communicate and deliver instruction or directions to American students, or other knowledge consumers? Han (2002) proposed to assess people's intercultural effectiveness on five levels, namely: (a) the ability to handle psychological stress, (b) the ability to effectively communicate, (c) the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, (d) the ability to have cross-cultural awareness, and (e) the ability to have cultural empathy.

Alberts (2008) primarily called attention to the ability, or lack of ability thereof, foreign-born faculty members to effectively communicate, have cross-cultural awareness and have cultural empathy. She argued, "While most students stated they appreciated the different perspective that foreign-born professors provide, a few felt uncomfortable with a non-American criticizing their home country" (p. 200). To understand the pertinence of this concern, one must consider the global nature of international exchanges of scholars. To be global, exchanges must not be limited by language, customs, ideology, or geography. Therefore, while some foreign-born professors or teaching assistants may speak English as a first language, others have learned it as a second, third, or fourth language. Those who speak English as their first language often do not speak American English, but another variety such as British, Australian, Indian, or Nigerian. Either way, linguistic idioms and other paralinguistic items that might appear natural to native-born individuals may pose difficulty for the foreign-born instructors in delivering instruction.

One of the challenges faced by non-native American English speakers on college campuses results from their accents. Richards, Platt, and Platt (1996) defined accent as "a particular way of speaking which tells the listener something about the speaker's background" (p. 1). This particular way of pronouncing sounds and words indicates whether or not the speaker is a native speaker of the language under consideration. The accent has often resulted in employment discrimination especially in the field of English and English as a Second Language teaching (Maum, 2002). Lippi-Green (1997) found that teachers with foreign accents were perceived as less qualified and less effective than teachers who were native speakers of English. These perceptions were felt by students as well as colleagues. Clayton (2000) reported on the frustration of several undergraduate students on several campuses as they expressed the difficulty and stress they experienced as they struggled to understand the heavily accented English of an international teaching assistant or professor.

It seems essential to observe that most scholars who are awarded exchange grants to conduct graduate studies abroad are primarily selected for their leadership and academic potential. It is no mystery that those scholars become successful in award-winning research (Corley & Sabharwal, 2007). As such, when these scholars are hired as teaching assistants or professors, they may lack much needed pedagogical skills and ethical dispositions pertaining to the American educational system. Universities attempt to address these challenges by designing orientation programs to prepare teaching assistants to better interact with students in the American college classroom. However, there seems to be no systematic program that adequately prepares foreign-born professors for the intricacies of the American classroom. Many do learn on-the job, but many suffer humiliation and other humbling experiences.

Orientation programs for international teaching assistants, if systematically conducted, fall into three categories depending on how long they are and when they are held (Smith, 1992). Orientation programs are usually the shortest lasting one to five days and addressing the immediate survival and instructional needs of the international teaching assistants (ITAs). They are held a few days before the beginning of the semester. Pre-term programs can last anywhere between two and eight weeks in the summer preceding the fall semester; they tend to be intensive in nature. Concurrent programs are held during the regular

terms and are usually not intensive. The first two models cover several issues because they adopt a holistic approach by including in their ITA training instruction in language skills, pedagogy, cross-cultural aspects, and microteaching.

9 Views of Faculty: The Voices of Foreign-Born Faculty

To further explore the issues faced by foreign-born faculty members, the author conducted an e-mail survey and telephone and/or face-to-face interviews with eight foreign-born and foreign-educated faculty members and administrators. Each of the eight faculty or administrators attended at least one foreign university before coming to the U.S. Seven of the eight are already naturalized U.S. citizens. All eight respondents were employed by an institution of higher education at the time of the survey and interview. From both e-mail and telephone interviews, participants responded to six broad, open-ended questions about (a) their perception of differences and similarities between students in their native countries and U.S. students, (b) the challenges they faced with using U.S. academic conventions in their work, (c) the degree and quality of their personal and professional relationships with peer U.S. faculty and with the U.S. academic system, (d) the challenges they faced working with the legal system, (e) their adjustment to the American English, and (f) their progress within the academic system. Each e-mail response was followed up by a telephone or face-to-face interview. The responses were analyzed qualitatively for both the themes proposed and other emergent ideas. In addition to the survey and interviews, the author attempted to offer his own perspective, in light of literature, about issues that tend to cause misunderstandings between foreign-born faculty and their host institutions.

In the following paragraphs, the reviewer summarized the thoughts and comments of the respondents. In answering the six questions listed above, each respondent was asked to (a) describe first impressions s/he had, (b) put the impressions in perspective, and (c) offer advice to prospective foreign-born faculty and administrators. Beyond the comments, this account represents experience of the author who, besides graduating from his home country's university, went on to complete postgraduate degrees in the UK and the U.S. and teach at two U.S. universities. Member checks were used several times to verify and update comments made by respondents. Cross-verification of comments was also used as a means of reaching consensus on themes presented below.

9.1 Backgrounds of the Respondents

To protect the identities of the respondents, Table 4 only summarizes the predominant languages spoken by each respondent, the foreign universities s/he attended, and the U.S. state where s/he is employed. All these faculty members and administrators completed their first degrees in their home countries, and came to the U.S. already married and employed. All eight respondents are either naturalized U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

Faculty Interviewed by Predominant Language Spoken, University Attended and State of

Employment

Predominant Language Spoken	Foreign Universities Attended	State of Employment
Chinese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pennsylvania State University • Northern Arizona University 	Oklahoma
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virginia Tech University • University of Toronto, Canada 	Illinois
Sinhala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 	Illinois
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Pittsburg 	Illinois
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Leeds, UK • Northern Arizona University 	Illinois
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Arizona University 	Illinois
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Illinois University • University of Chicago 	Illinois
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exeter University, UK 	New York
<i>continued on next page</i>		

Table 4

10 Perceptions of Rudeness, Obnoxiousness and Adversity toward the Foreign-Born

In their responses to questions, all eight respondents insisted that their comments should not be taken out of context, or over-generalized. They acknowledged that, along their journey in academia, they have taught, and worked with, the most understanding, compromising, and generous students and fellow faculty members. However, they have also encountered what appeared to be cases of rudeness, cultural unawareness, and obnoxious behavior from their American students and colleagues. As one of the respondents observed, in his country, there is “role distinction between students and professors.” Professors, according to the respondent, are considered elders. Elders are accountable and respected. In his country, it would be unfathomable for a student to challenge the validity of what the professor says, especially doing so in front of other students. This participant indicated that it is taking him a while to adjust to what he perceives as students’ lack of consideration for him as a professor and elder. Another respondent perceived gender discrimination in students’ rudeness and confrontations. According to her, she has not heard of the same degree of confrontational challenges directed at her male colleagues, native-born or foreign-born.

The question is not whether or not students should challenge the foreign-born instructor, but whether issues of conflict can be put in some logical perspective. Indeed, students’ incivility and adversity toward faculty members may be pervasive, and not targeted to a particular group. It appears, as another participant observed, that “the students are socialized to be blatantly honest.” But why do foreign-born professionals seem to be so defensive about their short-comings, and what aggravates native-born students and colleagues about the foreign-born in their midst? More importantly, how do respondents debunk the claim by some native-born minority activists that foreign-born minorities distance themselves from fellow domestic-minority students and faculty (Tapia, 2008)? For instance, as Tapia claimed, “it is not unusual for those foreigners to view their domestic-minority counterparts negatively and to strongly resist being identified with them” (http://www.caam.rice.edu/~rat/articles/true_diversity_tapia_chronicle_2007-09-28.html. 4th paragraph from end of paper).

11 Different Academic Discourse, Diction and Idiosyncrasies

There is no mystery that the typical foreign-born faculty speaks American English with a heavy, thick, foreign accent. As one respondent reflected, “we must acknowledge that not all we say or write is intelligible, even when we resort to the often heard excuse that we were taught British English.” He continued, “no matter how well we speak or write, it takes time to adjust to the academic conventions used in a foreign university system.” To make matters worse, another respondent shared, “our attempts to perfect the American ‘T’ and ‘R’ or the ‘schwa’ sounds will only make us sound funny.”

Foreign-born instructors must be aware that their diction and idiosyncrasies can hinder their instructional delivery or participation on faculty committee. To complicate matters, on every campus, there seems to be a group of intolerant and impatient students who feel at a disadvantage by being taught by a foreign-born instructor. For these students, being taught by “foreigners” with unintelligible accents is a waste of time and money for “a class for which I have paid.” The same phenomenon of students feeling at a disadvantage as a result of being taught by a foreigner was raised by Alberts (2008). Two participants reacted to this issue. For one participant, the reaction came in the form of a caution to other foreign-born faculty members. She stated, “Everything you say and do can be used against you.” The other participant was more philosophical about the situation. He observed, “It’s not about you. And, it’s not about them. Blame it on the moment, and their immaturity.” “Hopefully,” he concluded, “some do things as a group. You’ll notice a stark difference when you speak to each individually. . .they’ll listen, and sound so smart and apologetic . . .” Rather than become defensive, the respondents suggested that foreign-born faculty ought to

open up to their students and colleagues. Almost all respondents recall embarrassing situations when they answered wrong questions, laughed at a joke that was on them, used false cognates or code switching, or awkwardly uttered profanities that might be considered inoffensive in their cultures. These situations are more than a French speaking person saying **actually* with the intention of meaning “*currently*,” or using wrong intonation; s/he will eventually understand the concepts and nuances. The more important issue is that the foreign-born instructor comes to the U.S. with an already developed academic discourse that may take a while to convert to the U.S. educational system, and often with prejudices that may take a while to dissipate. If the college or university where s/he teaches does not have a comprehensive exchange program, and the students and colleagues do not understand, then those missteps will continue accumulating into insurmountable hurdles.

12 Perceptions of Hurdles during the Adjustment Process

All eight respondents shared their job-threatening fears and discomfort of working in a system where every word one utters, every action one does or does not do, can be a cause for a lawsuit. The irony of these fears seems to be that even native-born colleagues are not any more knowledgeable about, or more confident in, the legal system. Fischer, Schimmel, and Stellam (2007) captured eloquently the genesis of this fear,

12.1

Americans are a litigious people. . . In fact, educators ignore the law at their peril, since the U.S. Supreme Court has rules that teachers and administrators may be held personally liable in money damages for violating students’ clearly established constitutional rights. (p. xi)

Unfortunately, for many foreign-born and foreign-educated individuals, as one the participants above suggested, grasping the concept that teachers could be sued for everything they do, or say is a tough proposition. Fortunately, on one hand, none of the participants knew personally of a fellow foreign-born faculty member who had been sued for things said in class, except for a few grievances for grade adjustment. At least three participants had been in situations in which students came to negotiate a grade adjustment, or even filed a grievance with the department. Still, the fear, whether founded or not, remains that one could be sued for violations of which s/he is not aware. According to one respondent, in his country, what could be sexual harassment in the U.S. is just common interaction between students and professors. In his country, people tell jokes that might be considered gender-offensive in the U.S. or whose sexual innuendos could be cause for grave sexual harassment suits. They touch one another without any fear that their act of affection would be assigned some sexual connotation. It appears necessary for departments and colleges that host foreign-born professionals to become aware of such different value systems, and enhance an open climate where native born and foreign born faculty can critically assess unintended conflicts. Most importantly, appropriate orientation programs for new foreign-born faculty ought to always include issues of lawsuits and ethical conduct.

What is more, as all respondents recalled, foreign-born faculty members, especially during their first years on U.S. campuses, are as much concerned, if not more, about the immigration process as they are about settling in academically. If they make one document filing error, miss an appointment with the immigration office, they could easily find themselves, or their families, on the deportation list. As a consequence, the academic’s academic performance, research and service suffer. Unfortunately, because native-born department chairs, fellow faculty and students are not educated or concerned about those immigration issues, the foreign-born academic is left to fend for him/herself in a process that can take an “eternity.” During that time, it seems justified to ask why these critical processes are not communicated between the planners at the State Department and individual universities.

Finally, while the foreign-born faculty will eventually learn to transcend embarrassment related to their accents and slowness to understand casual communication, gaffes that have promotion implications might be more complicated to learn from. As at least one of the respondents recounted, college and university’s administration often and subtly use the “foreignness” of faculty members to create challenges to promotion.

Thus a foreign-born faculty member could find himself deprived of opportunities to participate in university-wide task forces, even on issues where he has documented expertise. In the perception of the respondents, the situation often arises when the administration is, on one hand, afraid that such participation of the foreign-born faculty member might expose him to recognition beyond the department or academic unit, and therefore become a competitor to non-foreign born. On the other hand, the administration might be considering the foreign-born faculty member a liability not to expose to university-wide or external scrutiny. In either case, it might help ease the administration's fears if they knew that the typical foreign-born faculty member was a rightful immigrant chasing the American dream, as was every other citizen.

13 Perceptions of U.S. Indifference to World Affairs

The U.S., as a country, is diplomatically represented in virtually every country in the world and intervenes in world conflicts across the planet. All eight respondents were bemused by the lack of world awareness they initially experienced on U.S. campuses. In fact, although research (for example, Lin, Pearce & Wang, 2009) recognizes that America continues needing imported talents, Americans, in general, and students and faculty, in particular, seem to be indifferent to world affairs. As all eight respondents challenged, the strength of the U.S. lies in the comprehensiveness of its federal system. However, the disjunction between national and states or local agendas is also the country's weakness. The best example of this disjunction can be found in the federal policy of continuous population rejuvenation. Each year, thousands of foreign nationals are invited through a planned mechanism to immigrate into the U.S. Those individuals include faculty members. In simplified terms, through the Immigration Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-649), the U.S. admits 700,000 new immigrants annually, including employment-related professionals (priority workers, professionals with advanced degrees, aliens of extraordinary ability, skilled workers and professionals) and recipients of "diversity visas," which are offered to countries whose nationals are under-represented in the U.S. In the perceptions of the respondents, this federal policy is not known on campuses. According to one respondent, if native born faculty and administrators were aware of this federal intent to diversify both the U.S. population and the workplace, maybe a climate of "open arms" would exist on campuses. However, according to the respondents, fellow faculty and administrators are as ignorant of such federal initiatives as are students. This needed awareness could help on several fronts.

Many foreign-born academics come to the U.S. uneducated about the academic conventions used in the U.S. educational system, including the grading system, the metric system conversion, and division and multiplication. Assessment of student work in many countries does not rely on multiple-choice or projects as it does in the U.S. In many countries, because of limited printed or electronic materials, students rely heavily on teachers' notes that they memorize. Fellow native-born faculty members' experience with the system would be very useful in helping newcomers make a harmless transition.

Coupled with this stereotypical indifference to world affairs is the perception by foreigners of over generalized cultural unawareness of U.S. citizens, in general. Each one of the respondents, Asian or African, has, at some point, been baffled by the seemingly limited basic knowledge of her students and colleagues. In the educational systems of most foreign countries outside the U.S., students are expected to know about the geography and history of other countries. All respondents challenged that, before they came to the U.S., they could name most former U.S. presidents, major cities or events, and even major entertainment personalities. In their social studies, they knew for example, about Tennessee Valley Authority, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China, the Amazon forest, the Siberian Tundra, the Chin Dynasty, the French Revolution, the Seven Pillars of Islam, and the Peace of Westphalian Treaties. They could tell how the Statue of Liberty was donated to the American people, and many other facts. Not only are students in other countries thought to know about other cultures, but they claim they remain connected to the outside world through foreign cultural centers established in their countries, television, and international radios such as Voice of America, Radio France Internationale, Deutsche Welle, and British Broadcasting Corporation.

However, how founded are these claims by the participants that Americans are culturally unaware? Apparently, limited world knowledge is not just American. According to Lipsett (2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education>)

at-geography⁵), the majority of Britons surveyed thought English was the most spoken language in the world, as opposed to Mandarin Chinese. Examples of renowned surveys in which Americans fare better than other citizens in the developed world abound (for example, Jones, 2006). Why are Americans singled out, then?

Furthermore, compounding the invisibility of foreign-born academics on campus is the marginalization of disciplines and programs of studies in which having a foreign perspective is an advantage. Such disciplines and programs of studies ideally make up the core of graduate and undergraduate programs, and include comparative and international studies and social, historical, psychological, and philosophical foundations of education. The content of those disciplines, while it can be taught by local instructors, could use and benefit from the expertise of foreign-born faculty. Unfortunately, as Gahungu (2010) illustrated in his study on master's degrees in educational administration in Illinois, social foundations of education are gradually becoming precarious in the academy. Not only does their marginalization have a negative effect on the quality of academic programs (Bullough, 2008; Butin, 2005; Dottin, Jones, Simpson & Watras, 2005), but it could also annihilate the role of foreign-born academics as globalization and internationalization agents. In departments that have deemphasized foundations of education studies, the foreign-born faculty will find themselves assigned courses to which they cannot bring their international and global perspective. Such a situation sets up the foreign-born instructor to awkward confrontations with students, resulting in poor evaluations, and potentially jeopardizing the instructor's career in U.S. higher education. In this context, as one respondent recalls an incident in his leadership class, students will resist any attempts from the instructor to bring theoretical and philosophical perspectives to course contents, which they view as a waste of time and effort. Ultimately, the foreign-born academics will rightfully be perceived as unqualified impostors stealing positions from rightful native-born counter-parts.

Finally, to conclude this section, the participants attempted to put the notion of indifference to world affairs in politics. One participant was particularly concerned that, in his country of origin, campuses are over-politicized, in relation to U.S. campuses. Often, these students are manipulated by people in power. This over-politicization may give the false impression that students are experts in world and national politics. However, because of its exploitative nature, over involvement in politics, can cause problems, rather than solve them. The participants noted,

13.1

University students in (country name suppressed) are highly involved in the country's politics. Student militancy is directly linked to the political parties in the country. I feel that political parties use students for their own political ends. Lots of social and political problems are there due to, as I think, over-involvement of students in politics.

Needless to say, the participant was not bothered that more students on U.S. campuses than in his country seemed apolitical.

14 Perceptions of Sharp Discrepancies in the U.S. Educational System

Nothing can prepare an instructor from overseas to the sharp educational divide that exists in the U.S. educational system. Of course, it hardly helps that most foreign-born nationals' background knowledge about the U.S. educational system comes from such acclaimed books as the *Shame of the Nation* or *Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol (2006, 1992), or reports such as *A Nation at Risk* (1983). Initially, it is difficult not to dismiss those reports and writings as other examples of the Americans' cynicism against their government. However, once on a U.S. campus, one cannot help but realize that there are two types of students, as in many other societies: the cream of the crop and the unsophisticated ones. Thus, one of the respondents commented that he had difficulty understanding why so many students were not aware of such concepts as Bloomfield's eight parts of speech. To him, it sounded *un-academic* when college students uttered, "I didn't do nothing," "*where is my book at?," "*I should have went," or "*your welcome." Worse,

⁵<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/nov/19/bad-at-geography>

one would not expect the typical college student or colleague to be confused about the genitive case, as in “*it’s title is...” Those mistakes might be considered “*unschooled*” in many cultures, he reflected. As one participant put it, “it is irritatingly uncomfortable when you are asked to speak English by someone who (in your view, this author’s addition) does not speak it himself.” If one happens to have both international and non-international students in one’s class, how will one separate the seriousness of the international student’s linguistic interference when he says, “I have 22 years” (from French, meaning “I am 22 years old”) from the carelessness in the native-born saying, “can I *aks you a question?,” or “*theyselves/hisself” (instead of themselves/himself)?

15 Putting Issues in Perspective

The perspectives of these eight faculty members cannot claim to be a representation of all foreign-born and foreign-educated academics working in the U.S. higher educational system, nor does the review of literature pretend to offer a flawless picture of internationalization and globalization needs in higher education in the U.S. In this paper, the author attempted to paint who foreign-born and foreign-educated academics are, and the potential they could represent for the internationalization and globalization of U.S. campuses. By the numbers, the foreign-born population in US institutions of higher education is limited to a very few nationalities. As such, the perspectives reported in this paper may not represent the typical foreign-born faculty member, who is from South or East Asia by birth, and who does not teach an educational discipline, but science and engineering. Also, because of the limited number of the participating faculty members, voices such as those of native-born faculty, and those from other areas of the world could have enhanced the discussion. A larger-scale study of these academics would shed more light on the role foreign-born faculty members ought to play in internationalizing the U.S. higher education system, as well as the challenges they face on their journey.

Nonetheless, the literature reviewed, as well as the voices captured in this paper, can give a glimpse into the work ahead for institutions of higher education to enrich their campuses with a much needed international awareness with the help of foreign-born and foreign educated faculty and scholars. On one hand, policy makers and strategic planners need to confront the disjunction between globalization and internationalization intents at the federal level and the integration of the foreign-born workforce on campuses. On the other hand in programs such as education, where the presence of the foreign-born is hardly visible, assuming the three roles identified by O’Hara (2009)—influencing students, infusing their perspectives into research and establishing connections with overseas partners, and disseminating their knowledge and experiences with the wider campus community—will be a difficult task. It is hoped that departments and colleges will find some elements in these accounts and literature reviewed helpful in exploring issues, concerns, and strategies needed in creating an academy for the future.

In summary, in the developing world, expatriate teachers and other development “benefactors,” particularly the ones from the more developed countries, are de facto superior to local professionals. The situation is different for foreign-born professionals joining the faculty in the U.S. The foreign-born academic must learn and understand the values of democracy that guide most corporate and civil life in the U.S. First and foremost, U.S. students are not paid a stipend for being students as is the case in most countries around the world. Because American students pay for their own studies, with their parents’ money, merit scholarships, or bank loans, it makes sense that the students expect much from faculty. More than in other countries, students’ property right to education must be reckoned with, and foreign-born academics ought not to dismiss that crucial aspect.

Likewise, as illustrated above, what foreign-born perceive as indifference to the rest of the world from American students might be due, not necessarily, to arrogance or chauvinism, but to the overstretched international role played by the U.S. Countries such as the U.S. have embassies and consular representations in virtually all the countries of the world. In 1999, the U.S. had diplomatic missions in 189 countries (Plischke, 1999). By contrast, many developing countries have diplomatic representations in a few countries, primarily in their former colonial powers. Without dismissing the notoriety of Americans’ poor foreign language skills and overall insularity, it may be unrealistic to expect U.S. citizens to know about every other single nation

on the planet.

There is no better way for a newcomer to understand the dynamics of democracy than to explore the tribulations and motivations of American students. Besides juggling family life and school, and often coming back to college at an old age, they seldom back away from the ideals of liberty and freedom. The instructor must understand that students do not lose their constitutional rights when they come to campus. Instructors must not expect their students to uncritically regurgitate course notes. Rather than being threatened by students challenging the validity of what they “profess,” foreign-born faculty members must embrace the confrontations as opportunities for professional growth. Also, foreign-born faculty members must understand that, indeed, their foreign accents are real. Their choice of words and idiosyncrasies, even when they come from English-speaking countries, can confuse the students and put the latter at a disadvantage.

Secondly, for faculty members who are not confrontational by nature or upbringing, the first days as instructors at an American college or university can be very discouraging. Whether new foreign-born faculty members admit it or not, there will always be those times when they will not understand questions, comments, or requests from students. There will be times when they do not know how to react to a student petitioning for a grade change because s/he “did everything you asked me to do.”

Finally, for misunderstandings to dissipate, both parties might need to do more than rely on first impressions. Understanding the complexity of the U.S. society and educational system will not happen overnight. Although one participant advises that “no one can tell you how to survive,” it is essential that the new foreign-born academic receive understanding, patience, mentoring, and support from fellow native-born colleagues and administrators. Following is a list of suggestions that could assist the foreign-born college professor in solving, at least partially, the problem of unintelligibility that often results from having limited background knowledge of the U.S. educational system, in addition to not relying on a different academic discourse, different value system, and speaking with a foreign accent. These tips may also help the foreign-born faculty establish credibility within the host institution.

16 Recommendations for Foreign-Born Faculty

The foreign-born professional should try to seek, to the extent possible, a first teaching position at a school that has some support structure for international students and faculty members, and has a mission for globalizing its programs. Once hired, it is necessary for the foreign-born academic to learn as much as possible about the U.S. educational system, especially about rudimentary politics. It is important that the foreign-born faculty member understand the relationship between the federal and state constitutions regarding school laws. In everyday practice, people will be referring to federal laws and policies such as A Nation at Risk (1983) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Americans like to speak about landmark court cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (school desegregation), *Lau v. Nichols* (bilingual education), *Tinker v. Des Moines* (freedom of expression), *Roe v. Wade* (abortion), *Miranda v. Arizona* (protection from self-incrimination); it is necessary that the foreign-born faculty show some understanding of those decisions. Similarly, the foreign-born faculty ought to know about concepts covered in daily political discussions such as land-grant colleges and universities, public schools, walls of separation, charter schools, vouchers, etc.

Foreign-born faculty academics must become less defensive about linguistic shortcomings. If the students say they speak with an unintelligible accent, chances are that they do, and the remark does not have to be made in error-free English to be valid. For that, the professor must learn to speak slowly and listen. Slowing speech down allows the listener to hear the sounds and the words one makes. This is especially important if the students are taking notes. Then, the foreign-born faculty member must learn the technique of repeating and paraphrasing themselves. Hearing the same expression more than once makes it easier to understand, especially if the idea is expressed in different words.

Additionally, it is necessary that the newly arrived foreign-born academic learn how to use instructional technology tools, including computers, whiteboards, overhead projectors, and others. If foreign-born faculty members realize that students are having difficulty understanding words or concepts, they should write them on the board. It might be helpful if they adopted to always give students an outline of the contents being

taught. Most importantly, however, they must understand that the students have access to other resources beside instructors. Aware of communication limitations, the foreign-born faculty member should let students do much of the talking. If a student asks a question, the foreign-born instructor ought sometimes to ask the class if anybody can answer it, instead. This is an effective technique to involve students in the lesson; and it is easier for the students to understand. At the end of the students' responses to one another, the instructor could then paraphrase or elaborate on their answers.

The foreign-born faculty member must reconcile with the fact that s/he is functioning in a new, challenging, environment. She probably has never taught a class with so many learning styles or so many types of students. Traditional students are studying alongside older, non-traditional students, employed, wives, fathers, international students, students with physical and learning disabilities, etc. For that, the faculty member must take the time to adjust both his/her attitude to teaching, but also his/her rapport with the campus community. The best advice would be to seek and work with a mentor. A carefully selected colleague will invite a foreign-born faculty member to a class session, and explain the rules of the academy.

Needless to say, the new instructor must learn the tricks of academia. Professionalism in US academia is judged by such dispositions as punctuality, observance of timelines, functionality in instructional technologies, and conducting research, which may not be top priorities in other educational systems or cultures. Academic conventions and routines are also a must in the professional life of the faculty. Conventions such as the letter grade system can be very confusing, if one is not used to them. A 7 out of 10 may be a top grade in many countries, while the corresponding grade in the US educational system—D—is a poor grade. Likewise, a 6 out of 10 in some foreign countries may not be a failing grade as it is in U.S. universities. Most of all, the foreign-born “professor” must reconcile with a new concept of status. Students will speak back to the teacher. They will be blatantly honest, and that is okay.

Finally, the foreign-born faculty ought to avoid over-stretching to please the host institution. In most public universities, participation in work-related activities is guided by contract between faculty unions and academic administrations. It is necessary that the foreign-born faculty member understand his/her rights and responsibilities as stipulated in the contract. Failure to follow the rules and timelines set in the contract may result in the termination of the faculty. Beyond the campus, the faculty must also belong to one or more professional associations in his/her discipline, and know exactly the expectations of his/her department regarding making presentations, publishing, and serving on committees. Most departments will have funds for travel to conferences, as well as support services to assist in professional development. That is why it is recommended that the new faculty member belong to the school's faculty development program and the local teacher's union. Unions fight for all, indiscriminately.

In summary, foreign-born faculty members intent on advancing the international awareness on the campus must not passively wait for the school community to develop policies that embrace global and international awareness, as a condition for their participations; rather foreign-born faculty members must be proactive. For that, they should aim to do the following:

- Create new courses, certificates (for example, certificates in international education) and degree programs that specifically expand the academic and professional discourse beyond the confines of the U.S. and the developed world.
- To the extent possible, add international contents, skills and techniques to the courses they teach.
- Encourage students and faculty in their home countries to apply for exchange programs at their institutions, students in their classes or associations to apply for study abroad programs, and colleagues to apply for exchange programs and conduct research together.
- Seek to have their institutions sign memoranda of understanding for academic and program exchanges with their native countries' institutions of higher education.
- Continuously involve their students in research on current issues and trends in international and global endeavors.
- Team-teach courses with native-born faculty, and, if possible, participate in online course teaching and research with faculty in their countries of origin.

17 Recommendations for Departments and Colleges and Universities

The best gift that U.S. students, fellow faculty and administrators could give to foreign-born faculty is support and understanding. First, foreign-born academics are not imposters on U.S. campuses. While representing only a few nationalities and disciplines, foreign-born faculty members are generally part of a global plan coordinated at the federal level to rejuvenate and diversify the academy. Many have gone through rigorous selection processes to come to U.S. campuses. As such, as hosts, students, fellow faculty and administrators need to understand that accents and other idiosyncrasies are not what define the role of faculty. Their academic discourse will take a while to adjust to the U.S. educational system; their accents may never. Every step of the way is a learning experience; with a little patience, these foreign-born instructors will become part of the U.S. educational system.

Host campuses need to understand that factors that prevent these foreign-born individuals from teaching or doing research to their best capacities may be outside the academy. For that, it is necessary that campuses provide opportunities to these individuals to explain what the immigration process entails and means. Faculty development and other orientation programs ought to include aspects of resettlement, as well as professional and personal isolation.

It appears necessary for U.S. campuses to emphasize elements of world knowledge and academic standards for students who may have come from academically-challenged high schools. Basic tolerance for other peoples' cultures and perspectives ought to be enhanced on campus.

Administration at the department, college and university level must work to enhance the values of international interdependence. The greatness of the United States of America lies in its leadership in the world. The nation is not only diplomatically represented in virtually every foreign nation in the world, but it also leads in its humanitarian aid and intervention in foreign conflicts. It is an economic and political superpower with which world countries partner. However, a nation cannot lead the world if it fails to understand the aspirations, wishes, and needs of other people. Fortunately, the U.S. has a unique opportunity of continuously receiving the best educated ambassadors from all over the world to teach its future workforce. The U.S. also has a unique opportunity, thanks to its diplomatic and economic ties with virtually every nation in the world, to influence the diversification of foreign-born individuals with highest degrees who can contribute to the internationalization and globalization of its higher education. Once a diverse body of foreign-born faculty members is represented on campuses, not allowing them to serve as liaisons between their home cultures and U.S. campuses is like an airline company assigning supersonic jets to local flight routes. U.S. campuses must enhance the opportunity to their foreign-born to be their internationalizing and globalizing change agents.

In summary, what is at stake is not foreign-born faculty members' adjustment to the U.S. educational system, but rather the advancement of global awareness and international competency for U.S. students and campus communities. To the extent that academic, social and administrative programs are committed to global and international awareness, foreign-born faculty will find time to adjust. Such an adjustment will involve both parties - the institution and the foreign-born professional themselves. Besides slow adjustment to a new academic discourse and an environment that seems immune to the outside world, these professionals have to confront their own prejudices. Having a system that is open to diversity will provide foreign-born professionals an opportunity to re-evaluate their value systems. Their perception of rude and obnoxious campuses may be projections of their own upbringing, often in unequal and elitist societies. The toughest test for foreign-born faculty from the developing world, particularly, is to accept a paradigm shift from prescriptive, teacher-centered teaching to a pluralistic model of learning where abundance of resources allows for greater credibility cross-checking. Such an inviting climate will also allow fellow native-born students and faculty to confront and overcome their fears of foreignness. The presence of foreign-born professionals ought to allow departments to expand their mission to educate international change agents.

Academic and administrative units will not be able to receive the most from the assets that the foreign-born professional represent if a comprehensive discussion is not started to both understand the curricular and extra-curricular dimension of teaching on a foreign campus and enhance the appreciation for international understanding, cooperation and peace, human rights and fundamental freedoms. To create this climate on campus, the following conditions must be present:

- Academic, administrative and social units must make an explicit and intentional effort to change or strengthen their missions, policies, conceptual frameworks, etc., with statements reflecting international competency and global awareness.
- Institutions must recognize international competency as an asset for professional growth, thus making it a part of promotion and tenure decisions. For that, institutions must allow the creation of such academic support programs as centers for international education, international sections in their libraries, and others.
- Institutions must reduce their campuses' insularity by inviting renowned international educators, international political figures to dialogue with the campus community. The campus community must also be exposed to international clubs, associations with international memberships, and other forums.
- Institutions must establish connections with overseas partners through commitment to exchange faculty, students and materials, and participate in joint humanitarian ventures.
- Higher education institutions, as a body, must plan the diversification and integration of foreign-born faculty by developing subsequent globalization and internationalization goals, and, in turn, recommending them to federal and state institutions whose charge is to facilitate the supply and demand of foreign-born professionals with required credentials.
- The institution must commit to the elimination of disincentives that discourage foreign-born faculty from both coming into the school community and thriving professionally once they are there. The commitment will include insuring that such services as academic personnel administration services and human resources are staffed with people who understand immigration policies and procedures, housing and health for international professionals and their families, and other services needed for social, academic, and economic integration into the U.S. society.

It is hoped that these efforts will not only expand the commitment of the institution to diversity, but will also give foreign-born faculty an opportunity to assume their multiple roles of influencing students and shaping future generations of internationally aware leaders, bringing international perspectives in research, overcoming their personal limitations such as accent, and becoming true citizens of the world.

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