



SALZBURG
GLOBAL
SEMINAR

Students at the Margins and the Institutions that Serve Them: A Global Perspective

In partnership with:



Listening. Learning. Leading.



Sponsored by:



Monday, October 13, 2014

What do we mean by “Minority Serving Institutions”?

“Minority Serving Institutions” (MSIs) might be a well understood and used term in the US, but how is this term understood in the rest of the world? Is it even applicable?

MSIs in the US are federally defined and include mission-led institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) as well as higher education institutions that have either over 25% low-income Latino or 10% low-income Asian and Pacific Islander students.

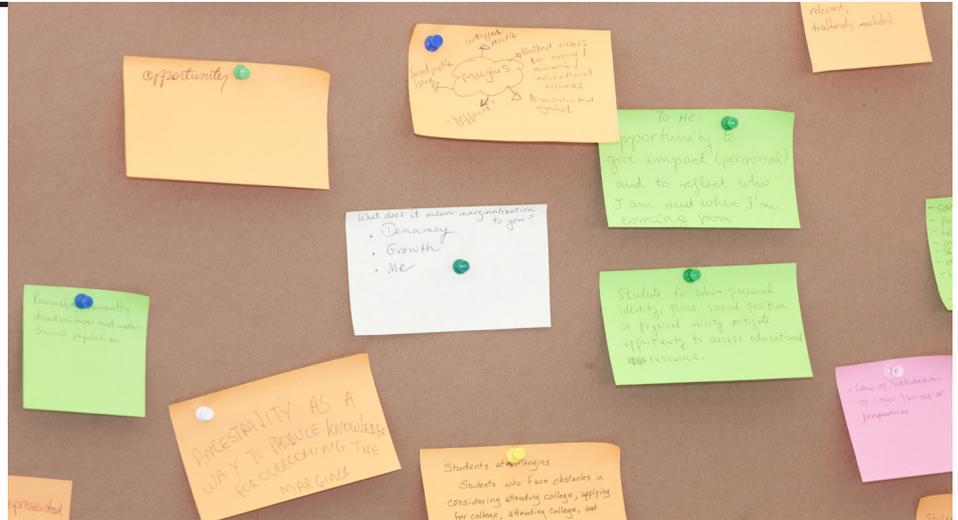
Similar institutions do exist outside of the US. The UPenn Center for Minority Serving Institutions have identified at least 66 “MSIs” in 22 countries, such as Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in Australia, University of Fort Hare in South Africa, Sami University College in Norway, and numerous Jesuit-led initiatives in refugee camps around the world.

But many more institutions serve marginalized students across the globe – and that is where the Fellows of the Salzburg Global session *Students at the Margins and the Institutions that Serve Them* come in.

The Fellows have been encouraged to expand this list and network of marginalized student-serving institutions – the focus being on the “serving”.

Many colleges and universities have minorities attending them, but what are these institutions doing to not only ensure access to higher education for marginalized students, but also ensure that these students thrive once there and ultimately graduate? Have they “embraced” their status as an MSI?

The expanded list will be compiled and circulated by the Center for MSIs after the Salzburg session.



Who are the students at the margins? And how can institutions best serve them?

The Diversity of Diversity

In many countries, minorities are disadvantaged but not all disadvantaged students belong to a minority; there is a diversity of diversities and a multitude of marginalized communities.

In South Africa, which had followed and has since moved away a system similar to the US minority serving institution (MSI) model (see left), Black/African students make up the majority of students, yet they remain marginalized both in access to higher education (despite *de jure* equal access) and once they arrive on campus. Simply encouraging cross-campus social events isn't enough; Black students' realities and expectations of the college experience can be vastly different from their White classmates, especially those fortunate enough to come from a long family legacy college attendance. Many Black students attend college on scholarships and must work much harder than their White classmates to stay in school. Equal access has not led to equal attainment with Whites still graduating at a much higher rate than their Black peers.

Marginalization also remains a problem for even the Black/non-

White faculty on the campuses of some South African universities, showing that it is the institutions as much as the students that need to change.

MSIs in the US are defined along race and ethnic lines, and in many countries affirmative action policies take a similar approach. However, many more students are marginalized for more than just their race; gender, sexuality, and language can also play a part in marginalization.

Enforced language assimilation can ensure access to higher education for minority groups (such as the Roma in Hungary, see next page), however students can lose their ability to communicate at an academic/high level in their mother tongue when attending a university in another/majority language. But it is not as simple as colleges enabling their students to submit their work in their native language; higher education institutions need to also have faculty fluent enough to assess the work.

In China, marginalization can be four fold: gender and ethnicity play a role, but urbanization and geography are the factors of greatest disparity.

Some ethnic minorities are now



Panelists Susana Munoz, Bill New and Ita Sheehy take questions from the floor

Displaced students The margin of the margins

Often overlooked and undercounted, displaced students find themselves even more marginalized than many other minorities.

In Europe, the Roma have long since been segregated or excluded entirely from public education systems. Many Central European countries, where the Roma have lived for centuries, enacted policies that saw Roma sent to the same special schools as those for the mentally disabled. Whilst this practice is waning, school attendance and completion remain low. Fewer than half of all Roma students progress to high school, with only 5% making it to college. Even fewer graduate.

A major barrier to Roma education, in addition to systemic and institutionalized racism is language. Many Roma speak Romani in the home, meaning that children struggle with the language of instruction in school.

In Hungary, a state policy of language assimilation for all peoples has enabled Hungarian-speaking Roma students to fare better in the education system than their peers in other countries, but this has come at the cost of their native tongue.

Another group that faces the language barrier is refugees. There

are currently an estimated 40 million refugees in the world, including internally displaced people. Many of these children and adults have been out of formal education for many years as they move in search of asylum.

Education services are sometimes provided by NGOs in refugee camps, but many refugees are not living in camps but in local communities of their host country for extended periods; the average length of time someone spends as a refugee is 17 years.

Estimates of numbers of and length of time spent as refugees are fairly accurate as the UN High Commission for Refugees helps maintain databases on people as they move across countries. However this is not the case for many other displaced groups.

Assisting the Roma can be difficult as there exist no accurate numbers. Given the difficult history of the region (Roma in Nazi-occupied countries were sent to the same extermination camps as the Jews), many countries now do not collect ethnic, race or faith-based data in their censuses, and even if they did, many Roma will opt not to be identified as such if possible.

The number of undocumented

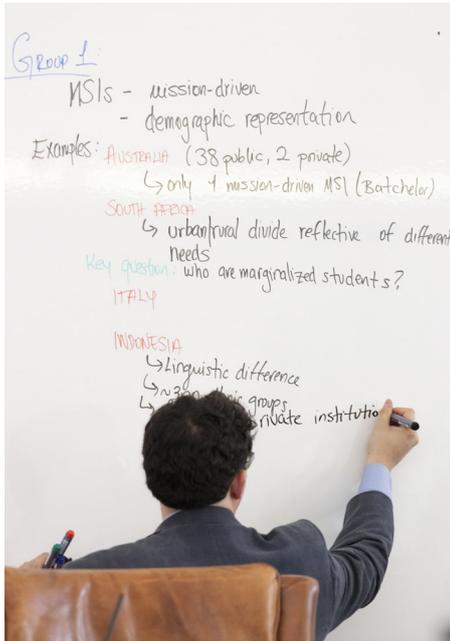
students in the US higher education system is also difficult to calculate as students are unlikely to declare their legal status. Estimates instead are often based on those who declare themselves as resident non-citizens primarily from Latin America, especially Mexico.

Their legal status means that they are unable to access state aid to attend higher education, despite typically coming from very low income backgrounds. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) can enable some undocumented students to legally work, but only for a two-year period. These financial struggles often mean that students can take up to nine to 12 years to complete a Bachelor’s degree.

Without a federal directive, such as the proposed DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act, states are currently able to act as they choose. Some states have started to offer help to their undocumented students, whilst others actively hinder their access to the labor market and higher education, and others operate on a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy.

For these students, often born in the US with no experience of any other country, the threat of deportation of either their families or themselves “is a lived fear.”

All our photos are available for download on flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal. For non-watermarked images, please contact Salzburg Global Editor Louise Hallman: lhallman@salzburgglobal.org. All photos must be credited as “Salzburg Global Seminar/Ela Grieshaber”



outperforming the Han majority in higher education, especially those concentrated in urban areas and which have adopted Mandarin over their traditional dialects. However in the more remote areas of the country, this is not the case.

In the urban centers of the East, girls outperform boys at all levels of education and outnumber their male counterparts in higher education. But in the rural West, the picture is vastly different, with fewer girls attending primary education and rarely reaching higher education. And both girls and boys in the West are disadvantaged in comparison to their Eastern peers; they often have lower levels of Mandarin Chinese, English and IT skills.

China's growing higher education system needs to tackle this disparity.

In Israel, in addition to that of how to address the education of its Arab-Israeli minority (especially with regards to the language of instruction and assessment; Hebrew, the language of the state versus Arabic, the native language of Arab-Israelis), challenges also exist in the recent integration of the growing minority of Ultra Orthodox Jews into the higher education system.

Traditionally this sector of society had been exempt from all state education, military service and the labor market. Following protests, Ultra Orthodox Jews are now attending institutions such as Hebrew University in Jerusalem. But their long self-exclusion from state schooling in favor of religious education has left this growing sector of Israeli society woefully unprepared for higher education. Hebrew University resisted calls for a separate campus for the students, but offers a separate preparatory course catering to their needs.

Across the globe, poverty remains the biggest barrier to education access and success, regardless of other forms of marginalization.

As one Fellow recounted, one of her students said: “I make sure my clothes are always clean so [other students and faculty] won't know I'm poor.” Another asked, “Is it possible to make students reared in poverty comfortable at wealthy colleges? Do they ever really feel at home?”





From the Floor Tweets of the day's discussions #SalzburgMSI

Michael Sorrell @michaelsorrell

Is it possible to make students reared in poverty comfortable at wealthy colleges? Do they ever really feel at home?

Salzburg Global @salzburgglobal

Much of a student's success is derived from their own resilience & drive - how do institutions "bottle" drive to encourage others?

Penn Center for MSIs @CenterForMSIs

"It's a crime for students to pay registration fees when the institution doesn't provide the climate for them to succeed."

Penn Center for MSIs @CenterForMSIs

"I think of the margin not as a place of disempowerment, but a place of extreme possibilities."

Susana Munoz @SusanaPhD

Supporting undocumented students in Salzburg, Austria with @ProfessorFlores! @ScholarshipsAZ #SalzburgMSI



Michael Sorrell @michaelsorrell

The idea of a "student at the margin" is very, very different depending upon where you live and how you see the world. #SalzburgMSI

Nelson Bowman III @nelsonbowmanlll

"Numeric definition of MSIs does not work when the majority is at the margins" @CenterForMSIs

Clare Shine @ShineSalzburg

Focus on "serving": building network of institutions proud to expand opportunities & success for those at the margins

Calling all bloggers!

If you're interested in writing either an op-ed style article or a personal reflection blog post for our website SalzburgGlobal.org whilst you're here this week, please let Salzburg Global Editor, Louise Hallman know or email your submission directly to lhallman@salzburgglobal.org.

If you intend to write for your own organization's website or publication either whilst you're here or after the session, please make sure to observe the **Chatham House Rule** (information on which is in your Welcome Pack). If you're in any doubt, please do not hesitate to contact Louise.

We'll be posting all our photos to our Flickr account: www.flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal and Facebook: www.facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal

Missed yesterday's newsletter?
You can find all the newsletters, thought papers and other articles on the session page:

www.salzburgglobal.org/go/537