

# Best Practices for U.S. University-Based Professional Development Programs

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# Objectives

- Discuss the impact of professional development programs on the internationalization of U.S. Colleges and Universities.
- Explain best practices in international adult education/professional training.
- Describe best practices to create a successful international experience for visiting professionals.

# Internationalization of U.S. Colleges and Universities

- Internationalization of your campus?
- Desire to contribute to capacity building?
- Revenue?
- Goals of upper administration/institution?
- Goals of an academic department?
- External demand?



**What is the driver for developing international professional training programs?**

- Prime awards from federal agencies  
(Ex. Department of State – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs)
- Sub-awards from an implementing partner (Ex: IREX)
- Sponsoring agency request
- International university / educational organization request
- International/multi-national business request

## Types of Programs

### **If you decide to administer:**

- Demands on staffing and office resources
- Programmatic capacity
- Accounting and Grant administration expertise

### **Programs administered by campus departments**

- Are they using your services or bypassing your office?
- How do you make your office relevant?
- What can your office provide?
  - Immigration, Logistics, Cultural programs

### **Will you be collaborating across university offices?**

- ESL program
- Extension office
- College/School
- Executive education
- Distance education

**Considerations when deciding to develop international professional training programs**

- Cross-campus collaborations
- Connections with campus population: students, faculty and staff
- Identification of faculty champions
- Community engagement
- Partnerships with private industry
- Relationships with implementing partners
- Furthers mission of the office/division

**Benefits derived from working in this area of program development**

# Best Practices in Adult Education and Professional Training

- Characteristics of adult learners
- Facilitation Strategies for adult learners
- Digital learning for adult learners



**Topics**

Adult learners are:

- called “participants” or “learners”
- not blank slates - they have many experiences and viewpoints to contribute
- primary sources of ideas and examples
- intrinsically motivated, and often participating due to life or workplace goals

**Characteristics of Adult Learners**

## Adult learners

- verify information based on their beliefs and experiences
- expect what they are learning to be immediately useful
- want to be involved in evaluating their progress toward achievement

## Characteristics of Adult Learners

- Explicit objectives
- Clear instructions
- Acknowledgement of prior experience
- Learning activities related to real life/goals
- Differentiated materials
- Opportunity to reflect and contextualize
- Allow share of experiences

## **Facilitation Strategies**

## Outcomes of digital learning:

- Innovation in teaching and learning
- Extension of visibility and reach
- Increase sustainability of programs

## Strategies:

- Clear learning objectives
- Modularized content
- Ability to practice and test
- Acknowledge and share experiences

**Digital Learning Strategies**

- Private communities
- Cohorts
- International exposure
- Learner and pedagogical data
- Extension of on-campus programs



## University Use of MOOCs

# Best Practices for Creating Successful Experiences for Visiting Professionals



## Collecting Information

- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Conducting a Goals and Skills Survey
- Retrospective Survey vs. Pre and Post

## Expectation Management (Yours and Theirs!)

- Program Overview & Objectives
- Variations in backgrounds and skill levels
- Customization
- Professors and Practitioners
- Distinguished Visitors

## Logistics

- Housing and food
- Family and Professional Responsibilities at home

**Before the Program...**

- Pre-Departure Checklist
  - Packing tips
  - Basic Travel Information
- Health and Wellness
  - Medical Forms & Screening
  - Vaccinations
  - Pregnancy
- Cultural Norms
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Networking



## Pre-Departure Orientation

- Knowing/acknowledging the background of participants (years of experience)
- Allowing for participants to share their context and experiences
  - Learning between participants
  - Recognizing they are professionals and have a lot to share with each other and their American counterparts
- Allowing adequate time for reflection about how their experience relates to their profession at home
- Using Feedback to inform program design
  - Being open to change
  - Strategize how to make changes in real time

## Program Implementation

- Differentiation of instruction
  - Orally, handouts, PowerPoints
- High Content Load, Low Linguistic Load
  - It is important to stay away from jargon and academic “speak” both with instruction and with assigned readings. This will lessen the linguistic load for participants.
  - BUT keep the content load high. Visiting professionals are at the university for an intensive development experience. Do not lessen the content of a class or reading when you decrease the linguistic load.
  - Consider the volume of reading and what needs to be ‘required’ during the program vs ‘optional’ as resources they can read later/take home. Consider the program holistically in terms of time and effort (not too much ‘homework’)
- Language Levels and TOEFL Scores
  - Language Support
  - Varying degree of academic intensity in different programs.

## Content Delivery

# .....Not just a field trip

## Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

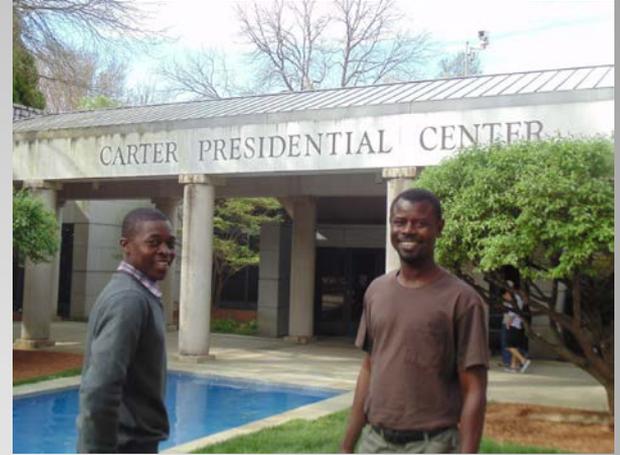
- Active engaged experiences
- Context, background, and historical significance

## Build in sufficient time to process

- Briefing and De-briefing of experiences

## Service Learning

- American Volunteerism
- Volunteering in an area of technical expertise
- Opportunity to tie in topical relevance



**Experiential Learning**

- Finding inroads for participants to share their knowledge and expertise with the university and broader community
- Demonstrate diversity of the U.S.
- Public-speaking opportunities for Participants
- Networking & Peer Collaboration Opportunities
- Mutual Mentorship

## Community Engagement

- Field Guides
- Professional Development Module Toolkit
- Host University Minimum Standards and Best Practices
- Peer Collaborators Guide
- Networking Best Practices
- Leadership Development Plan

## Support Materials

**What's your experience?**