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Expatriate academic staff in the United Arab Emirates : the nature of their work experience in higher education institutions / Ann E. Austin ...

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Abstract

(HAs many countries expand their higher education systems, they must attract, support, and retain qualified academic staff. This paper focuses on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a case study of a nation drawing on large numbers of mostly expatriate faculty working in short-term academic appointments. The paper begins by considering the national context within which expatriate faculty work in the UAE. Then, using a published conceptual framework highlighting key elements of academic work, the paper examines defining aspects of the work experience of expatriate faculty in the UAE, including work expectations (teaching, research, and service); equity (compensation, incentives, and benefits); autonomy, academic freedom, and flexibility; collegiality and institutional involvement; and professional growth. The discussion considers the implications of these elements of academic work for the satisfaction, motivation, and institutional commitment of the expatriate faculty members. The sample of 29 expatriate faculty studied is drawn from the population of full-time

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instructors at three public and three semi-public institutions in the UAE who teach in education or media, humanities and social sciences, science or engineering, and business or economics. The discussion of findings highlights satisfactions and concerns, as well as the relationship of work experiences with organizational commitment. The nature of academic work in many countries is shifting toward temporary and short-term contract-based appointments. Thus, analysis of the experiences of expatriate academic staff working within the UAE, where the majority of faculty members are in short-term positions, raises issues relevant to those in other countries where the non-permanent academic workforce is increasing. Additionally, issues considered are of interest to those who study the academic career and the factors shaping it. RK / Abstract übernommen) Austin, Ann E. aaustin@msu.edu