

International Network of Scholar Activists (INoSA)-- *A Global Community of Scholars and Teachers linked to movements for global justice and transformation*

Scholar/activists who convened during various iterations of the World Social Forum process have recognized that:

- the work of teachers and researchers is vital to global efforts for social change;
- substantial numbers of scholars and teachers from a variety of disciplines routinely participate in the WSF process and related radical movements and projects;
- teachers and scholars have particular opportunities and challenges regarding our engagement with contemporary movements for social *transformation*;
- teachers and scholars need a supportive network to challenge neoliberal ideology and practice in our daily work experience;
- there is a general need for more coordinated international action to help advance the aims of the World Social Forum and related movements for global justice.

We also know from experience and from analyses of coalitions that it is *organized constituencies* that are best able to advance their goals and be effective members of social movement coalitions. Only scholars can organize to liberate our profession from the constraints of neoliberalism. And only scholars can help activists connect efficiently and effectively with people in our profession to advance movement aims. This network aims to enhance the understanding of scholar-activists of our special role in defending the knowledge commons and public education while supporting and collaborating with other movement allies.

The International Network of Scholar Activists aims to:

- Provide information to members on radical/global justice movements and their projects;
- Serve as a liaison between scholar-activists and these movement processes;
- Encourage, facilitate, and coordinate teacher-scholar participation in the World Social Forum and related movement processes;
- Encourage and advance scholarly and broader public attention to radical movements and projects;
- Connect national, regional, and discipline-based associations whose work complements that of INoSA;
- Aid in the socialization of young teacher-scholars into our profession.
- Facilitate coordinated action among network members;

Background

A diverse group of around 200 scholars and teachers gathered in Porto Alegre, Brazil at the Fifth World Social Forum to begin a process of developing a network of teachers and scholars who are actively supporting the aims of the World Social Forum and related movements. At that meeting, the participants outlined *three major areas of work* that are most relevant to teachers and scholars. These include: 1) resisting neoliberalism (predatory

capitalism*) on our campuses, 2) defending the knowledge commons, and 3) supporting social movements and radical democracy. We noted how the first two areas are struggles where scholar-activists must be on the front lines to protect and advance equitable access to education and knowledge.

Participants in the 2005 WSF identified specific actions that participants agreed to take in their home communities in order to carry forward the work of the World Social Forum. This analysis guides the work of INoSA.

Selected Proposals for Action from the 2005 World Social Forum

Resisting neoliberalism/ predatory capitalism* on campus

- Support labor struggles on campus for academic and non-academic workers;
- Monitor university relations to private sector and establish code of ethics;
- Promote fair labor policies on campus and by university subcontractors and licensees;
- Promote ethical university investment standards;
- Protect access to public spaces on campus by non-commercial interests

Defending and expanding access to knowledge and education

- Support and promote the “copy-left” movement against the enclosure of the global knowledge commons;
- Support efforts to expand access to academic journals in poor communities and countries;
- Support campaigns to encourage public funding of universities and to limit increases in student tuition and fees;
- Monitor and support efforts to protect public access to and privacy on the internet;

Supporting social movements and radical democracy

- Sponsor public educational events--on and off campus;
- Promote education for global citizenship, based in radical feminist, [Environmental Justice Principles](#) and the [Jimez Principles](#);
- Support recognized “global days of action” for peace and justice by supporting student participation in action or organizing teach-ins;
- Foster enduring and mutually-respectful ties to community organizations;
- Frame research questions and write analyses that speak to needs of under-represented and historically oppressed groups;

*Language of “predatory capitalism” draws from ideas in Saskia Sassen’s *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*