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## **Expanding Transnational Frames into Composition Studies: Revising the Rhetoric and Writing Minor at the American University in Cairo**

James P. Austin  
*Fort Hays State University, [jpaustin@ccsu.edu](mailto:jpaustin@ccsu.edu)*

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# 3

## Expanding Transnational Frames into Composition Studies: Revising the Rhetoric and Writing Minor at the American University in Cairo

James P. Austin

FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY (US)

This chapter examines U.S.-based approaches to curricular revision of the Rhetoric and Writing Minor at the American University in Cairo (AUC) through analysis of faculty interviews and relevant artifacts. Through this analysis, and consideration of AUC's development in the context of changes in Egypt, the chapter argues that U.S.-based curricular approaches satisfied various local needs among AUC's writing faculty and students. These findings complicate claims within international composition studies, which are concerned with non-reflective export of U.S. linguistic, pedagogical and program models into international sites. This chapter calls for expanding the perspective of U.S.-based approaches to composition studies to include paradigms from transnational literacy studies.

Keywords: transnationalism; composition studies; literacy studies; international writing programs

In recent years, the global presence of universities styled after U. S. institutions of higher education has increased such that, as of June 2015, there were more than 270 international branch campuses (IBCs) operating in other countries (Lane & Kinser, 2015), an increase from more than 200 in 2011, 162 in 2009 and 82 in 2006 (Lawton & Kastomitos, 2012). Many of these IBCs are versions of universities originating in the US. Additionally, more than 65 IBCs are located in the Middle East, primarily in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. (See Miller & Pessoa, Telafici & Rudd, and Hodges & Kent, this

volume, for discussion on IBCs.) This influx of IBCs correlates with an increase in new standalone universities with U.S.-based orientations, such as the American University of Kuwait and the American University of Sharjah (See Ronesi; Jarkas & Fakhreddine; and Annous, Nicolas, & Townsend this volume, for discussions of standalone universities.).

For U.S.-based IBCs or standalone “American Universities,” writing unit development often presents challenges for local WPAs who seek to reconcile distant approaches with local needs and practices. This development has raised concern among some composition scholars with international foci. In their study of African universities in the 1990s, Muchiri, Myers and Ndoli (1995) counter assumptions about the universality of writing instruction by describing infrastructural and other material challenges for writing students in Kenya, Tanzania, and Zaire. Schaub (2003) critiques the “insularity” of composition studies when describing the challenges he experienced as a WPA at the American University in Cairo in the 1990s. Donahue (2009) expresses concern over the non-reflective export of U.S.-based rhetoric and composition models abroad, calling for “deep intercultural awareness [and] familiarity with other systems and contexts” (p. 236) as part of the internationalization of U.S.-based writing research.

The call to integrate U.S.-based approaches to rhetoric, composition and writing with practices in other countries been taken up meaningfully within recent scholarship. In his introduction to *Writing Programs Worldwide: Profiles of Academic Writing in Many Places*, Thaiss (2012) seeks to “honor the variety and rich complexity of persons, languages, traditions, geographies, conditions, and purposes that both inspire and constrain the writing pedagogies and research” (p. 6) of the forty-plus international writing programs profiled in the volume. The purpose, he claims, is to learn “how an institution . . . conceives of the needs of its students in regard to learning a discipline, ‘writing,’ that in basic ways crosses all disciplines and aids learning in all of them” (2012, p. 6). He cites the Bologna Process in Europe and the emergence of the Internet as an open source for the exchange of curriculum as factors driving transnational approaches to writing research and program administration. Martins (2015) builds upon this scholarship in his introduction to *Transnational Writing Program Administration*. He renews calls for approaches that are able to transcend a “narrow, . . . privileged, Western view” (2015, p. 5) of composition, thereby moving beyond unidirectional flows of U.S.-based approaches to writing programs and pedagogies into non-U.S. sites. This includes repositioning writing programs to meet “context-specific educational, curricular, and cultural needs and interests” (Martin, 2015, p. 7) in ways that reflect ongoing practices and offer collaborative approaches for developing programs.

In this chapter, I will contribute to this scholarship by describing the development of a writing unit at the American University in Cairo (AUC), which has distinct historical, linguistic, and educational features. By examining a period when the Department of Rhetoric and Composition purposefully expanded curricula and adopted ideologies germane to U.S.-based approaches for its rhetoric and writing minor, I will argue that, while the process generated tension among international and national faculty, the largely U.S.-based approach to program development served departmental needs and student interests while responding to exigent institutional circumstances. As I will show, the new curriculum allowed students access to literacy knowledge that could be deployed across a range of Egyptian professions with international reach (such as business and non-governmental organizations). The students also benefited from approaches to creative nonfiction practiced in the US that seemed to address a submerged need for public discourse in Egypt. Faculty discovered meaningful opportunities for professional development and career advancement that had the potential to alter departmental roles and career trajectories. For the department, this turn represented an opportunity to maintain autonomy in a university undergoing significant academic reorganization.

Moreover, this study reveals findings which, on the surface, seem paradoxical: while the adoption of U.S. approaches to a writing curriculum served the needs of an English-language, U.S.-styled department and institution located in Egypt, it also served Egyptian needs. These findings will complicate concerns within the field about the importation of primarily U.S.-based pedagogies and practices to writing programs in institutions in other countries.

To provide historical context, I describe AUC's evolution into a U.S.-styled institution through ideological, political and economic changes within Egypt, resulting in developments which also gave rise to a writing unit purposefully aligned with composition studies from the United States. Next, I account for the ways in which the development and revision of the rhetoric and writing minor benefited the department, faculty and students to show that, while tensions over curricular changes often correlated to national and/or disciplinary affiliations, the purposes driving the revision coalesced with locally-determined departmental needs and student interests—needs and interests focused largely on English-language literacies associated with U.S.-based approaches. Next I describe the way in which extra-departmental factors accelerated aspects of the curricular revision as an example of the ways in which international writing programs must account for institutional realities.

The significance of these findings will then be treated in the context of composition scholarship to demonstrate that perspectives from transnational

literacy studies are useful in accounting for the unique and complex interactions between global and local contexts such as the one studied throughout this chapter.

## Personal Connections to the Department of Rhetoric and Composition

I have a personal connection to AUC, the Department of Rhetoric and Composition and the developments with the rhetoric and writing minor I address in this chapter. In 2006, I came to work in what was then known as the Writing Program at AUC, just as the unit was poised to break from the Department of English and Comparative Literature and establish an autonomous campus presence. This development corresponded with curricular changes. For instance, standardized syllabi and adjudication committees, which had been in place to protect the program from accusations of inconsistency and poor student writing development, were phased out. Faculty were encouraged to propose novel ways to teach extant composition offerings and develop new, upper-division offerings that could become part of a proposed minor. With another faculty member, for example, I proposed a creative nonfiction workshop class, which received an enthusiastic response from Egyptian students and is still offered more than six years after I returned to the United States.

This was an exciting period for me. Just two years removed from my MFA program, I was now living in Cairo, working with warm, enthusiastic students, and I was becoming increasingly involved in helping this writing unit during its transition. I understood that the stakes were high, not only for the Department of Rhetoric and Composition, but for writing units everywhere that sought autonomy within the academy. I wanted to be a part of this new department's success. Once the minor was approved and students began enrolling, I proposed to my chair a separate administrative position to address the specific needs of the minor. She agreed and appointed me as the coordinator of the minor. Soon, I was working closely with departmental faculty and administrators from Egypt and the United States with backgrounds in business, grant writing, rhetoric and composition, creative writing, cultural studies, and other fields.

As I coordinated the rhetoric and writing minor, I was struck by the concern among some faculty about the direction of the department. I noticed that these concerns often ran along national lines or were expressed by those with significant institutional experience. Later interviews reconfirmed the concerns of several constituencies. These ranged from a group that resisted vetting their syllabi to those who resisted making any kinds of changes that

might be suggested. As one instructor reported during our interview, this resistant faculty did not identify with rhetoric and was uncomfortable with its inclusion in the curriculum.

Because of these moments of resistance, I found myself questioning what we were doing. Was it in the best interests of everybody in the department to make these new transitions to U.S.-based approaches to rhetoric, composition and writing? Who would be affected by these changes? What had motivated these changes in the first place? These questions arose many times during the year I coordinated the rhetoric and writing minor. Some of my colleagues were concerned that they might be sidelined simply because of their kind of expertise or national affiliation. Was this turn simply another iteration of western ideological imperialism that would marginalize Egyptians or others who lacked specialized training in U.S.-based approaches to rhetoric and composition?

While my involvement with the rhetoric and writing minor provided valuable experience and prompted many questions, I was too embedded within the context to find meaningful answers. Moreover, I was not yet aware of transnational literacy studies scholarship. This scenario, and my resulting unanswered questions, drove my decision to return to the US to pursue doctoral studies in the field; this choice allowed me to develop the tools and insights to learn about the complex international politics of English and western education, the ways in which international writing programs function within these larger histories and present dynamics, and the relationship between what I had observed and experienced at AUC with what I was beginning to read in rhetoric and composition scholarship.

During my studies, I came to understand that the curricular revision at AUC was richer and more complex than what might be perceived as western imperialistic hegemony in the guise of rhetoric and composition. I discovered that binary ways of thinking about the interaction of western ways of knowing with non-western sites and people could not fully account for the development of this institution, the Department of Rhetoric and Composition, and the rhetoric and writing minor. What I seek now are more nuanced ways to consider, in their full richness and complexity, the interplay of U.S.-based approaches to program development with non-U.S. institutions, faculty and students.

## Situating Revision: The Development of AUC and the Writing Unit

In their history of the AUC writing unit in *Writing Programs Worldwide: Profiles of Academic Writing in Many Places*, Golson and Holdijk (2012) note

that sequenced writing courses were first developed at AUC in the 1950s, at the height of pan-Arab nationalism. Interestingly, AUC had been granted a waiver to policies that had otherwise shuttered foreign-language schools in Egypt (Murphy, 1987). Given that the initial establishment of sequenced writing courses occurred simultaneously with the exodus of English in educational institutions elsewhere in the country, it is likely that the university perceived a need to train its own students in English language and literacy practices, especially because, during the same period, AUC's English Language Institute was established. This development also suggests that the university saw English language and writing education as a significant part of its mission, and that Egypt, even at the height of Nasserite Arab nationalism, considered it worthwhile to maintain an English-language university in the country.

When Anwar Sadat realigned Egyptian ideologies and economic policies in the 1970s in ways that benefitted English in Egypt, thereby increasing the local significance of an AUC education, the writing unit began to align itself with developing U.S.-based *episteme*. Locally trained faculty in TESOL or literature began teaching in the unit, resulting in a mixed department of Egyptian, American, and British faculty that remains today. The unit began drawing upon emergent scholarship in composition studies throughout the 1970s and 1980s before formally aligning itself with the WPA Learning Outcomes within the field of rhetoric and composition in the early twenty-first century, "to better reflect current U.S. practices and to allow for easier integration with the credit-hour structure" (Golson & Holdijk, 2012, p. 184). This movement ultimately resulted in unit independence from the Department of English and Comparative Literature and the establishment of the rhetoric and writing minor, which appeared in the university catalog in 2009 and offered emphasis areas in academic, business and technical, and creative writing.

Both the history provided by Golson and Holdijk and informant interviews reveal that U.S.-based approaches to writing at AUC were enabled through local developments and invited by local actors. In most cases, these local actors were not rhetoric and composition scholars, but an international mix of faculty trained in TESOL, cultural studies, applied linguistics, creative writing, and literature. In this respect, aspects of the U.S.-based approach were *imported* into Egypt, not *exported* from the United States. This distinction is crucial. As AUC developed more purposefully into a U.S.-styled educational site, the writing unit also evolved by taking on the qualities of the U.S.-based approach. According to interview findings, this helped shield the unit from institutional critique and resulted in a curricular revision of the lower-division program. These developments also provided the foundation



for future changes, such as hiring rhetoric and composition scholars from the United States and creating the rhetoric and writing minor. The fact that U.S.-based approaches were used in this localized manner strongly suggests that U.S.-based approaches can be appropriated by local actors when there is a historical tradition of the U.S.-styled university and when its writing unit serves national, institutional and/or student needs. Throughout this chapter, I detail evidence that supports my call for more expansive frames that can account for the kinds of interactions non-U.S. faculty and students had with the U.S.-based approach.

## Methods and Data Collection

For this study, which had full approval from the IRB at AUC, I interviewed eight faculty who were employed by the Department of Rhetoric and Composition during the curricular revision period. I used Skype as the interface and Audacity for recording. I requested interviews with faculty who were directly involved with the revision to the rhetoric and writing minor, or who had developed and taught courses that would have been impacted by the revision. These faculty represented a mix of Americans and Egyptians, came from many different educational backgrounds, and possessed many kinds of writing and literacy expertise. However, they are not intended to be fully representative of the nationality, educational background and areas of expertise among the department. For example, there was a significant faction of British faculty who were not interviewed for this study, but their involvement in this aspect of departmental operations was negligible. Other Egyptian faculty who taught primarily lower-division composition courses were also not interviewed, as they were not involved in teaching or developing upper-division courses that would have been included in the minor and thereby impacted by the minor's revision. Some Egyptian and American faculty members who were involved with aspects of the curricular revision were asked to participate, but they either declined or did not respond to the request. While their firsthand accounts are not included in this chapter, their involvement in the revision was often described through other interviews and the artifacts submitted by those who participated.

During the hour-long interviews, I asked participants about their role in the department and in regard to the revision of the rhetoric and writing minor during the 2009-2010 academic year. They were also asked to comment on what they considered to be the most significant activities and dynamics that arose during the revision period. These interviews were then coded to generate a coherent timeline for the period under study, and to establish



the positions and activities of interview participants and others mentioned during the interviews. Following this, the interviews were coded for dominant themes regarding the impact of the revision on faculty and students. Brief follow-up interviews were sometimes used to address questions that arose after the initial coding.

I also asked the interview participants to provide artifacts relevant to the study, which I used to augment and support interview findings. These artifacts ranged from personal (such as e-mails among faculty members addressing questions, concerns and disagreements) to public (a departmental self-study; a departmental memorandum; a draft of the original rhetoric and writing minor; a PowerPoint presentation for the university provost). Participants were aware that artifacts would be used within the study; however, anonymity is protected when these artifacts are mentioned. Several of these artifacts were used to account for the kinds of roles assumed by faculty members and the ways in which role changes and other kinds of interactions impacted faculty during the revision.

Additionally, I used the archival website *The Wayback Machine* to locate the 2009 and 2010 version of the catalog for the rhetoric and writing minor on the Internet so that changes in the mission and learning outcomes for the minor could be compared from one year to the next. This comparison not only helped establish the ways in which the minor had been revised to reflect an increased focus on U.S.-based approaches, but was used alongside primary sources to demonstrate ways in which changes extended from local practices and served local needs.

## Intersections: U.S.-Based Curriculum and Student Needs

The most significant findings in my study concern the changes that occurred in the Department of Rhetoric and Composition as a result of the revision of the rhetoric and writing minor. In this section I describe the ways in which a U.S.-based approach to this curricular revision intersected with the professional, creative and cultural needs of students, through my informants' experiences of the benefits to their students.

An American faculty member with long ties to the region and the international business community in Egypt described courses that he had originally developed following the adoption of WPA First-Year Outcomes and through collaboration with international faculty and businesses in Egypt. He explained the rationale for these courses during an interview:

I had also worked a lot on USAID projects in Egypt, and

in Tunisia and Morocco and Libya. I knew that the skills that we needed the local hires to have were completely absent. They were lacking. I saw [business and technical writing courses] as an opportunity to equip the students at AUC with the necessary skills to advance themselves quickly into management positions in the private sector. . . . When these students would graduate and go to work for companies, they would write and say, “Exactly what you were teaching me is exactly what I need.”

Indeed, the revision to the rhetoric and writing minor provided occasion to extend this teaching approach, maintaining focus on the production of “business and science/technical communications” while also analyzing the “norms and conventions” of the business, science and engineering fields, according to an archived version of the revised minor’s academic catalog (The American University in Cairo, 2010). During interviews for this study, some departmental faculty who had taught these business and technical writing courses prior to the revision recounted their earlier concern that curricular revisions—and a new “jargon” of rhetoric—would disrupt successful collaborations among the department, other institutional constituencies, and outside business contacts. These informants expressed relief that the revision did not result in these types of disruptions but, rather, the establishment of disciplinary language in the catalog, alongside an applied focus allowing students to develop literacy abilities relevant to professional communication within Egypt.

Additionally, an American faculty member with an MFA reported during her interview that she developed a creative nonfiction workshop, which became an important cornerstone of the creative emphasis and provided Egyptian students a disciplined, public forum to address personal and cultural dilemmas in a society that prefers acquiescence to norms. Drawing from her experience as a student, this faculty member reported developing a “pedagogy and process that arose from creative writing workshops that began in Iowa,” a reference to the University of Iowa’s seminal MFA program in creative writing. According to this informant, the approach included practicing the elements of creative nonfiction and implementing a pedagogy where students shared work for class discussion. In such a “workshop” approach, the authors listen without interjecting, while the class, under the instructor’s guidance, discusses the merits of the work.

This faculty member reported surprising results using this approach, as she found students were willing to write about and discuss topics not typi-

cally seen in Egyptian public discourse. For instance, she said that, when one student wrote about his atheist beliefs, she was initially concerned that she would have to “protect” this student from critique by his Muslim and Coptic Christian classmates, some of whom were devout. Instead, she observed the seriousness and curiosity of these students during the discussion, which focused on the merits of the writing and not disagreements with the student’s ideology. She said she learned that these young Egyptians were eager for opportunities to acknowledge and discuss complex religious, ideological and cultural dilemmas that were not typically addressed in Egyptian society. Based on the perceptions of these two informants, it appears that courses in business, technical and creative writing, developed and taught by U.S. faculty and similar to courses one might find in the United States, met emerging professional, creative and cultural needs for Egyptian students.

As part of the U.S.-based revision of the minor, the department chair, a scholar in rhetoric and composition hired from the United States, established a weekly rhetoric and composition proseminar. While the proseminar was open to all departmental faculty, it was specifically meant to provide faculty members with backgrounds outside rhetoric and composition the opportunity to learn about the foundations and development of the U.S.-based approach to the discipline. For Egyptian faculty with training in literature or TESOL or for American faculty with MFA degrees, the proseminar was an opportunity not only to learn about the discipline, but to gain purchase in an evolving department and develop new abilities that could be reflected in teaching and other departmental activity.

Despite these expanded opportunities, my study revealed continuing concerns about the way in which revisions to the minor would impact faculty. According to one American faculty member involved with curricular revisions, one concern focused on the possibility of “disenfranchisement” among long-term faculty: “There was a lot of suspicion coming in, like, ‘are these recommendations saying that I’m not legitimate or that I should teach this? Am I about to be disenfranchised with regard to the upper division?’” This concern overlapped with the apprehensions of those faculty members who reported being uneasy with the “jargon” accompanying the new approach. Another American faculty member with long ties to the region “heard directly” that “people who had been in the department a long time [but whose backgrounds were not in rhetoric and composition] were uncomfortable with change, and maybe felt a little bit threatened,” as the new policy gave preference to a narrow band of faculty who were not just educated in the United States, but who also had the appropriate kind of training relevant to the new direction. While those faculty members with long ties to AUC were warrant-

ed in their concerns, their concerns must be considered within the context of the extra-departmental institutional factors that were accelerating the pace of the disciplinary turn in the minor.

## Extra-Departmental Institutional Concerns: An Issue of Time

In addition to the departmental changes that came about as a result of revising, two recurrent concerns surfaced during the period under study: the speed with which the rhetoric and writing minor was revised and the manner in which its reorientation with U.S.-based approaches was emphasized. Yet, while these concerns might suggest that the turn toward U.S. approaches represented the very sort of development transnational composition scholars have cautioned against, there was another kind of localized, extra-departmental dynamic driving the speed and direction of the program's revision: the activities of a new provost with an agenda for significant restructuring of academic schools and departments. This agenda generated significant anxiety among faculty throughout the campus and specifically within the Department of Rhetoric and Composition. Some were concerned about layoffs, significant pay cuts, large increases in teaching load, or loss of access to professional development opportunities at the university. Anxiety that the university might disinvest in the Department of Rhetoric and Composition also hovered over the revision of the minor, which further drove the decision to implement U.S.-based approaches with the hope that such a move would quickly legitimize the nascent department.

One of the significant developments that also impacted their decision making involved differences in the ways in which the new provost communicated with faculty. Interview participants reported that the provost convened an unusually high number of faculty committees designed to offer recommendations to the provost's office. Because of this, it was difficult for department administrators to address concerns directly to the provost, as had been the case under different administrations; instead, these concerns were remediated into formal committee recommendations which never appeared to be acted upon. This created the additional, perhaps unintended, consequence of distancing faculty from the chief academic officer. It also exacerbated existing anxiety because faculty were unable to establish a rapport with the provost and were unclear about the ways their departments might be impacted by large-scale changes.

At the same time, other conversations about the ethos and makeup of the Department of Rhetoric and Composition were happening in committees

and faculty configurations across the campus. Several interview participants claimed that the purpose and history of rhetoric and composition as a stand-alone discipline was not well known on the AUC campus, a problem that was initially addressed by at least one faculty member through conversations on the campus shuttle and during faculty committee meetings. Still, according to this faculty member, there was “pressure about what we were, and should we be a part of Core [Curriculum, which manages institutional requirements], [or] should we be added on to ESL.” Also at this time, emerging concern about the size of the department—during the period under study, there were more than 40 full-time faculty in the department—led to preliminary discussions about ways to embed writing instruction within other departments, which would thereby abandon the department’s mission to establish the U.S.-style Department of Rhetoric and Composition within the institution. According to interview participants, the provost would often mention Columbia University as an example of a successful institution without a standalone writing department. For some informants, these discussions indicated that either the provost was unfamiliar with the technical and scholarly aspects of the changing department and did not fully appreciate the needs and interests of writing students at AUC, or that the resources needed to develop the department would be redeployed in a vast academic reorganization.

The department responded in several ways. In order to help establish the history and development of the U.S.-based approach to the discipline, and thereby justify the autonomy of departmental status, the department invited the provost for a formal visit. During this visit, several faculty members offered a presentation that summarized unit history and the discipline of rhetoric and composition in the US to argue for the unique role of rhetoric and composition at AUC and in Egypt. Their purpose was to underscore the important kind of work done within this department, to offer a vision for the future, and to place this work on par with other departments. Indeed, according to one prominent faculty member, much activity was devoted to “trying to figure out how [the department] can become equal with other departments.”

One of the major ways through which the department addressed concerns over its status was through accelerating the timeline for the adoption of U.S.-based approaches to the minor. Some informants said they had assumed that “the unit itself would have at least five years, if not ten, to grow into itself,” which would have allowed the department the opportunity to evolve organically and to articulate its ethos and local purpose through its programs and other activities. While unforeseen complications and tensions would have inevitably arisen during this assumed process of organic development, the department nevertheless would have had time to develop into an entity that

borrowed from the US while also drawing upon the eclectic intellectual, scholarly and creative expertise of faculty in order to meet emerging institutional and national needs. Indeed, the intention to move slowly was clear early on, from the 1990s when the AUC writing unit sponsored a weeklong visit by a U.S. composition scholar (whose recommendations were not adopted by the university faculty) to a visit from a major U.S. scholar in 2009. While these visits represented formal contact between established scholars and approaches from the United States and AUC, the goal was always to integrate U.S.-based approaches in a way and time deemed acceptable by the department.

However, the perceived need to quickly achieve equal status with other departments resulted in an accelerated time frame for revising the rhetoric and writing minor. This accelerated process resulted in turn in a focus on the qualifications needed to teach courses in the minor, which, for the period of my study, gave priority to U.S.-based faculty with the appropriate background.

The pressure applied by AUC's provost and the resulting accelerated revision of the rhetoric and writing minor offer two significant insights. First, this situation underscores the ongoing need for context-sensitive scholarship to account for the many kinds of localized developments that have an impact on the way in which U.S.-based approaches are taken up within non-U.S. sites. Through systematic attention to these kinds of localized factors, including the unique history of each institution, the field can account for many dynamics that drive the establishment and development of writing units outside the US that are based on U.S. models.

Second, while composition scholars have expressed concern about the unidirectional flow of U.S. perspectives, which may indicate a lack of collaborative will or possibly an imperialistic spirit, it is clear that institutional and national dynamics also influence the ways in which writing programs develop. Horner and Trimbur (2002) allow for the "significance of historically and institutionally immediate circumstances in what is . . . appropriate to a . . . set of institutional arrangements, made in a particular set of circumstances" (p. 623). In this AUC circumstance, then, a deliberately U.S.-styled, English-language institution modeled after universities in the United States nevertheless serves a range of Egyptian purposes, as I've suggested.

## Reframing International Writing Program Development within Transnational Literacy Studies

As stated in the opening of this chapter, scholars dating back two decades have critiqued the imposition of western practices and infrastructure onto non-U.S. educational sites where writing is taught. These scholars (Dona-

hue, 2009; Martins, 2015; Muchiri, Myers, & Ndoli, 1995, Schaub, 2003; and others) have argued that context sensitivity can help avoid the non-reflective export of a U.S. version of composition studies and writing program development. Likewise, critiques by scholars in composition studies, such as Canagarajah (2006), Matsuda (2006), and Horner and Trimbur (2002), have called for translanguaging pedagogies and the inclusion of World Englishes in our writing classrooms. These arguments highlight the largely unidirectional flow of U.S.-based pedagogies and practices associated to programs outside the US, and the ways in which such pedagogies and practices may result in inappropriate writing pedagogies, curricula, and programs. Given these arguments, the findings for this study offer another possibility: that English-only education and U.S.-based approaches can serve local interests in non-English sites, especially in those with histories and configurations similar to AUC.

The findings described in this chapter might cause us to reconsider some of the arguments from transnational composition studies around the uncritical exportation of U.S. pedagogy to other global contexts. In particular, our field needs to account more fully for global-local interactions that are neither strictly unidirectional nor wholly collaborative; that is, we need more expansive frames within composition studies to account for the full richness of global-local interactions of people and approaches to literacy that inform the development of writing programs outside the United States (see Annous, Nicolas, & Townsend; Nebel; Theado, Johnson, Highley, & Omar; this volume).

A related field with such expansive frames is transnational literacy studies, a rich sub-field of New Literacy Studies that builds upon Brandt and Clinton's (2002) call to transcend the local-distant binaries that had narrowed the perspective of New Literacy Studies scholarship. According to Warriner (2009), recent work in literacy studies has moved away from primary attention to local literacies and has begun to consider the many ways in which local and distant contexts interact through differing views of, and uses for, literacy across borders. Warriner states that this turn developed as the anthropological fields of transnationalism and transmigration began to consider "local practices and processes" alongside macro-level "global flows" of transnational human and ideological movement (2009, p. 160). The synergistic upshot of these parallel developments is such that the focus of literacy studies on social practice became combined with work into the "influences, processes and 'by-products' of globalization and migration" (Warriner, 2009, p. 161) to gain insight into the complex and idiosyncratic nature of global literacies that manifest locally. This, she argues, can break both fields from the binary patterns that have limited their ability to capture the myriad interactions of,



and uses for, local-global intersections in literacy.

Also within this field, Luke (2004) has called for increased attention to the relationship between literacy and formal institutions, such as schools, that impact the attitudes of many people toward literacy—both what it is and what it is useful for. Luke is concerned that educational contexts, as producers of “official” literacy, may encourage homogeneity in an era of internationalized global-local interaction. Because of this, he calls for “stud[ies] of local literacies . . . to engage increasingly with how the local is constituted in relation to the flows and ‘travelling cultures’ of globalization” (2004, p. 332). In the case of AUC, the Department of Rhetoric and Composition, and the development of the rhetoric and writing minor, I have argued that the writing instruction and curriculum in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at AUC, which is based primarily on a unidirectional flow of a U.S.-based approach, *is* local, inasmuch as this configuration of locality was mediated through the adaptation of the university to local political, social, economic and ideological changes in Egypt.

I conclude this chapter with a call for composition studies to draw from theory and research in transnational literacy studies, so that the field can more fully account for the many ways in which U.S.-based approaches, pedagogies, and ideologies interact with many kinds of local environments in increasingly global educational configurations. There is a need for such scholarship, given the dynamism of globalized higher education, and the role that U.S. institutions are playing in the development of global universities throughout the Middle East-North Africa region and the world. Two important needs would be served by such scholarship. First, the field will be in a stronger position to account for many possible kinds of local-global interactions of U.S.-based approaches with non-U.S. sites. Second, those with interest in the field outside the United States, or who are working to develop writing programs in other countries, can utilize a more expansive perspective to consider for themselves how best to construct writing programs that incorporate U.S.-based approaches while also accounting for the historical and present exigent circumstances of the nations and institutions in which they are working.

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