Have Framework, Will Travel: Extending the Frameworks into Transnational Higher Education

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_The Future Scholar: Researching and Teaching the Frameworks for Writing and Information Literacy._
Have Framework, Will Travel:
Extending the Frameworks into Transnational Higher Education

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Introduction [A]

The future scholar will require a range of skills, habits, and knowledge to be able to competently participate in an increasingly digital, globalized world. The Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and National Writing Program (NWP) Frameworks (ACRL 2015; CWPA, NCTE, and NWP 2011) both recognize this in their articulation of trends in information literacy, postsecondary writing, critical thinking, and higher education more broadly. The ACRL Framework characterizes the “rapidly changing higher education environment” as one where students play a larger part in the creation of new knowledge, while the WPA Framework articulates the “21st-century-skills” critical for college success, emphasizing the rise of digital technologies. However, it is the increasingly globalized nature of information and scholarship which draws our attention in the context of transnational higher education (TNHE), a higher education setting where these American frameworks are frequently being deployed to non-American students outside of America. This chapter introduces TNHE, provides background regarding the use of the Frameworks outside of the United States, and offers an important look into the application of the Frameworks in this unique, challenging, and increasingly common environment. Additionally, we highlight ways in which practitioners in both domestic and TNHE settings can learn from one another.

Transnational Higher Education [A]
TNHE is not easily defined amidst a wide array of types of educational provision which involve international students, study abroad, faculty mobility, and institutional mobility. Here we take the definition of TNHE as any form of higher education provision wherein students study for a credential outside of the country where the awarding institution is based (Naidoo 2009). This type of provision is growing rapidly by all measures, and can encompass many different types of cross-border programs, from partnerships, twinning programs, distance programs, and joint degrees to fully functioning branch campuses and franchises. For the purposes of this discussion, we also use the term TNHE to refer to institutions which award credentials that have been evaluated and accredited by a foreign agency itself authorized by a foreign government or ministry. While the prevalence of these programs can be difficult to track, estimates have made it clear that the number of such programs worldwide has risen dramatically in recent decades, reaching well into the thousands, and it is also clear that the United States is now a major source country for transnational programs and branch campuses (Naidoo 2009; Miller-Idriss and Hanauer 2011; Lawton and Katsomitros 2012). With no signs of slowing, the growth of TNHE programs suggests that many of us who work in higher education will at some point either participate in, interact with, or support a transnational program, if we have not already. This underscores the importance of examining the Frameworks and their application in TNHE settings, as well as anticipating and addressing the teaching and learning challenges which may go along with educational provision in such contexts.

Despite rapidly increasing globalization and transnationalization within higher education, our accreditation bodies, professional associations, frameworks, and policy initiatives continue to be largely circumscribed by national boundaries. Regarding higher education generally, Knight
states that “[f]orecasts that the nation-state would erode under globalization’s impact have so far proved too pessimistic…” (2008, 7). Indeed, the WPA and ACRL Frameworks remain highly nationalistic. The WPA Framework was written by faculty “nationwide” (CWPA, NCTE, and NWP 2011, 1) and endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Writing Project [emphasis added], along with the CWPA itself. The national context of the ACRL Framework is less explicit, discussing global concepts such as “higher education institutions,” “librarians,” “students,” and “the information ecosystem,” without addressing national boundaries or differences. However, early drafts of the Framework were published with a fuller explication of the framers’ concerns, outlining trends which it considered important to address in “the highly diverse landscape of higher education in the United States” [emphasis added] (ACRL 2014, 1). The ACRL Framework was also produced to exist alongside other national information literacy frameworks such as the British Seven Pillars (SCONUL 2011) and the Australasian ANZIL framework (2004), suggesting that while remarkable similarities and overlap exist, national bodies, memberships, and frameworks continue to meet a need and, thus, are likely to reflect the perspective and priorities of the source nation.

This fact is important for those teaching in TNHE, as it calls on us to consider and analyze important differences in the practice of higher education that exist between nations or regions and that are serviced by these tailored frameworks. Referring to the internationalization of higher education generally, Knight argues that “[t]he key issue which requires further analysis is how to achieve the most appropriate balance of interests and needs among local, national, regional, and international levels” (2008, 7). The search for this balance leads us to ask important questions about writing and information literacy curriculum and pedagogy in TNHE. What needs or demands are met by developing and deploying these Frameworks within a national context?
Does meeting those needs preclude the ACRL and WPA Frameworks from being effectively employed outside the United States? What are the special interests and needs of TNHE, and how can the Frameworks be applied to meet these needs? The remainder of this chapter seeks to answer these important questions as well as to identify unique opportunities present within the TNHE environment which may provide an exemplar to those engaged in strictly domestic practice.

**Why Do Frameworks Remain Nationalistic? [A]**

An important need being met through the use of a nationally-situated framework relates to accreditation, which is itself tied to the larger social demands on education systems at the national level. The ACRL Framework builds on a set of standards (ALA 2000) that has been recognized and endorsed by regional accrediting agencies as well as the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Similar recognition is no doubt an aspiration of the Framework document. Accreditors themselves set goals and outcomes for educational institutions which are aligned either with national interests such as the public good; or private interests such as the individual’s success with employment. Public social priorities and the economic affairs which affect individuals are still largely tied up along national borders; and we can see some regionalization of higher education affairs and quality assurance regimes in places where greater political and economic unification has already taken place, such as the European Higher Education Area (EHEA 2014) which corresponds with the European Union. Therefore, it is logical in some ways that despite open acknowledgment by ACRL that librarians “around the world” (2014, 8) have integrated its standards into their educational activities, no portion of the ACRL Framework is spent exploring or addressing the needs of those librarians directly. The
Framework is busy addressing what may appear to be more pressing issues domestically. The WPA Framework likewise receives endorsement from national associations which are focused on the larger objectives of the United States system of higher education. For instance, the NCTE states that it promotes “the use of language…to achieve full participation in society” (CWPA, NCTE and NWP 2011, front matter) reflecting the role of the United States’ education system in supporting its democratic ideals. These are important matters to attend to for the practitioners in libraries and writing centers across the United States whose work is supported by the Framework, as well as for key stakeholders and funders within the United States, particularly the US government.

**Why export Frameworks for use outside national borders? [A]**

We see three major factors at work driving the adoption of national frameworks outside national borders, and these are accreditation, equivalence, and efficiency.

First, as there are no fully international quality and accrediting regimes at this time,¹ many TNHE programs will aim for recognition and accreditation from both the host country, which may be a procedural or legal requirement, as well as from an organization representing the parent or model country, often the United States. In addition to programs with formal cross-border ties, many American-style institutions across the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region such as those represented by the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL 2015) have no official ties to an American parent, but elect to employ these frameworks for a variety of reasons, often in pursuit or support of accreditation from American agencies. Recent survey data shows many of the AMICAL libraries beginning to integrate the ACRL Framework into programs and practices (Click and Houlihan, forthcoming).
Second, transnational programs are often called on to demonstrate quality through equivalence with home campus programs. *Equivalence* is itself a term which can be defined in many ways and which, depending on the program, may apply to inputs, outputs, both, or neither (Farrugia 2012). Faculty members teaching in such programs often debate the extent to which curricula should be adapted to fit local needs, and whether doing so represents a decrease or an increase in overall program quality. An example of this conflict is found in the writing program of Dar al Hekma College in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, a tertiary institution serving Saudi women. Anson and Donahue (2015) explain that Dar al Hekma was set up and structured primarily on the advice of American educational consultants, and the College has received accreditation both by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education as well as the US-based Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. However, one of many practices recommended by the Americans that did not transfer smoothly to the Saudi context was the use of writing texts and workbooks featuring prompts and images around dating, driving cars, and homosexuality, all culturally taboo in Saudi Arabia. The writing program ended up selecting a different and less controversial set of books to work with, a choice one could argue was positive for increasing cultural relevance to students, or alternatively was negative for moving away from the educational objectives that writing programs in the United States often support—to “deliberately challenge students to interrogate their cultural beliefs or expose the sources of sexism, racism, homophobia, and so forth…” (Anson and Donahue 2015, chap. 1, loc. 726). In any case, while this program cannot be considered identical to that offered in model American contexts, it could still be argued to be equivalent. And while librarians and writing instructors in TNHE settings may adapt their curriculum and materials, the desire for equivalence is an important force for retaining national frameworks as core curricular documents.
Third, basic concerns for efficiency drive practitioners around the world away from reinvention of the wheel. Even in cases and places where a curricular framework may not seem a perfect fit, it may often be better and more useful than attempting to develop a custom product in-house.

Is it Possible to Use These American Frameworks Outside of America? [A]

In short, the answer is yes. In fact, the ACRL and WPA Frameworks both read as broadly inclusive, and the objectives outlined in each are universally applicable. The philosophical antecedents of the ACRL Framework, in particular, are derived from relational conceptions of information literacy put forth by the likes of Bruce (2007), Lupton (2010), and Limberg (2011), all of whom are cited in the initial draft (ACRL 2014). This view constitutes information literacy as a relationship between individuals and the information world in which they live, and seemingly invites us to analyze the unique characteristics of learners as well as the aspects of their environment in trying to understand that relationship and teach to it. In fact, the new researchers whom we might consider protégés of this research tradition such as Weston (2015), Johnston (2014), and Heinstrom (2003) have opened up important and necessary areas of inquiry into the relationships between information use and culture, language, and personality.

This tradition of inquiry seems practically tailor-made for informing curriculum deployment in a transnational context, which makes it fairly befuddling as to why the Framework’s founders would write at length about trends in American higher education such as the rise of professional degrees, undergraduate research, and the increasing popularity of team-based pedagogy, yet make no mention of either transnational educational provision or the increasing influx of international students on the domestic front in justifying their chosen
direction. Nevertheless, these theoretical underpinnings provide some very ready opportunities for addressing the challenges of teaching writing and information literacy in TNHE.

The WPA Framework, while often remaining explicitly nationalistic, expresses a view that young scholars who achieve the habits of mind it lays out will be better positioned to perform well in their academic courses and careers. This is true for students both in the United States and abroad, as education and economies globalize. Therefore the main challenges for suitability in a transnational context involve the social and educational values reflected in the WPA Frameworks’ stated objectives. Structurally, the document limits its scope to the sorts of education and activities it feels are appropriate and achievable for teachers and schools, noting in the introduction that students and their families are also responsible for the successful academic preparation of a student. This delineation may signify that in social structures where the contribution of school, a teacher, or a student’s family to their child’s education is viewed differently, certain aspects of this Framework might be difficult to implement.

Similarly, habits of mind such as “openness”, “curiosity”, and “responsibility” also reflect the values of a US-based education and culture. Such qualities or habits of thought would receive differing emphasis in other parts of the world, if we are to believe theories such as Hofstede’s cultural dimensions (2001). That said, we believe such differences are a matter of degree, and that ultimately there is great merit in adopting these educational objectives in a wide range of transnational contexts. The fact that a US-style education is so in demand in many developing countries is testimony to the shared educational objectives of different societies. For instance, the development of critical thinking and metacognitive abilities is recognized as essential for the creation of a knowledge economy in regions such as the GCC where national
leaders are making large investments in education as part of a strategy to diversify economies away from oil.

The main challenge for both the WPA and ACRL Frameworks in TNHE is effectively teaching them. Anson and Donahue warn writing program administrators against trying to “import a curriculum with meaning in one national context into an entirely different context, as if ‘learning to write’ is independent of complex cultural practices, ideologies, and activity systems” (2015 loc. 648). We now turn our attention to some of the specific challenges that the TNHE environment presents in teaching these Frameworks, as well as opportunities for addressing them.

What Are the Challenges of Writing and Information Use in TNHE? [A]

When it comes to teaching an American curriculum to non-Americans outside of America, there will necessarily be distinct and non-equivalent elements in the environment, and, in particular, the students. The linguistic, cultural, and academic backgrounds of students obviously require intentional consideration by practitioners in order to effectively teach and deploy a curriculum.

Language and Authority [B]

Language presents several complications when teaching information literacy and postsecondary writing to classes composed entirely of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Best practice has dictated for a long time that librarians limit technical terminology and jargon to aid both native and non-native speakers alike in comprehending information literacy instruction. This is common sense in any context, and it holds true across national
borders. However, the role of language in affecting information literacy development goes deeper. Johnston (2014), in research conducted with EFL students at an English-medium public tertiary institution in the United Arab Emirates, suggests that language may play an important role not only in basic comprehension and decoding of information, but also in value and perceived use of information sources. In this study, some participants used the fact that information was published in English as a superficial indicator of the information’s quality, deprioritizing information published in their native Arabic. The presence of such language bias is essential for educators to understand in order to effectively engage one of ACRL’s frames, “Authority is Constructed and Contextual.” This frame describes information experts as those who recognize that authority is socially constructed and endowed upon the authorities by communities. It guides us to consider the authority of individual authors and institutions and how they achieved that authority; for instance, public officials. However, the idea that the language of publication would be taken as an indication of quality suggests that something much larger than individual or institutional authority needs to be evaluated, and this is the global hierarchy of knowledge itself. Higher education research has documented the somewhat imbalanced flow of knowledge from the West to the East; or as Altbach (2004) frames it, from the “center” to the “periphery”. Therefore, we would encourage educators in TNHE to ask students to critically interrogate their own beliefs regarding the merit of scholarship or other information produced in English. A writing task centered on this topic or question would guide students to learn more about how knowledge is produced and how the systems of knowledge production and dissemination that we have in place may privilege certain authors and institutions, as well as to consider how they have or have not been exposed to examples of information which have built up their conceptions about information quality. While attention to this arena may seem beyond
the scope of a typical information literacy or writing program, we can see in our context that it is likely immediately relevant to students in their everyday information seeking, and may lead them towards dispositions articulated in this frame, such as “self-awareness of their own biases and worldview”, as well as the ability to “maintain an open mind” when encountering non-English language information and evaluating its relative merits. An activity such as this gives students the opportunity to practice something captured in another of the ACRL’s frames, “Information has Value”, where the knowledge practice “understand how and why some individuals or groups of individuals may be underrepresented or systematically marginalized within the systems that produce and disseminate information” is given. These areas of knowledge and understanding are very important to attend to for students in transnational contexts, not only out of concern for students’ learning but also out of our professional concern for the pursuit of social justice and fairness in scholarly practice and communication.

**Plagiarism and Writing Conventions [B]**

The ethical use and reuse of information as well as fluidity with the conventions of documentation are objectives common to both the ACRL and WPA Frameworks. The ACRL Framework deals with this in its frame, “Information Has Value”, which emphasizes practices such as the appropriate attribution of sources; and similarly the WPA Framework expresses this through its emphasis on “Knowledge of Conventions”, defined as knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate in a piece of writing. This knowledge is coupled with the habit of thinking responsibly. Practitioners of higher education in transnational programs have observed several characteristics common to TNHE students which may influence their ability to learn the habits of ethical information behavior required within the American/Western academic context.
Fawley (2007) reports that nearly two out of three students questioned in a competitive TNHE program had not heard of plagiarism prior to university studies. Our own experience and practice-based inquiry, drawn from a selective university in Qatar, indicates that a large percentage of incoming students—most of whom were straight-A students drawn from the top of their high school class—have never heard of a citation style such as APA or MLA; are unfamiliar with the vocabulary terms “reference” and “citation”; have never seen or used a scholarly journal; and have very limited experience with even basic research or essay writing. The WPA Framework explicitly warns that “[s]tandardized writing curricula or assessment instruments that emphasize formulaic writing for nonauthentic audiences will not reinforce the habits of mind and the experiences necessary for success as students encounter the writing demands of postsecondary education” (2011, 3), yet in many cases this is precisely the type of preparation that tertiary TNHE students bring with them from school.

In addition to challenges with students’ skills and abilities, we have challenges with their dispositions and attitudes. Globally, many K–12 education systems continue to rely on strategies such as rote learning and memorization (Fawley 2007, Weber et al. 2015), which has implications for how students understand the value of replication and copying. Fawley points out that in many cultures, the memorization and reproduction of scholarly work is viewed positively as a sign of respect; moreover, to change, innovate, or claim to be original may be felt to be immodest or boastful. Direct engagement with such views, as well as affording students an opportunity to reflect critically on how these views compare to the standards and expectations of traditional Western scholarship, would be very important to achieving the goals set out by the Frameworks.
Towards this end, we have devised a writing assignment for our own students which asks them to critically reflect on the differences they have personally experienced between high school and university, and the expectations of research, writing, and documentation encountered therein. Students are asked to consider why the expectations are different; and what might be unique about the tertiary or Western academic environment which calls for these skills and abilities. In doing so, we aim to increase motivation for a mastery of sometimes tedious conventions, as well as open an avenue for the development of critical attitudes towards socially acceptable behavior in varying academic and non-academic contexts.

This type of instruction is rooted in a variation theory of learning (Marton & Booth 1997), which defines learning as experiencing phenomena in new ways. This view on learning emphasizes making explicit what was previously taken for granted, and is rooted in the same phenomenological traditions and theoretical underpinnings which inspired the ACRL Framework’s definition of information literacy. The goal for us as educators then, is not to “correct” students or force them to unlearn “wrong” past habits; but rather to help them see that the differences in the conventions they may have used previously and the conventions they are asked to use in the current context concern look and purpose, not validity. We want our students to not only understand the attitudes and apply the conventions of information use within our academic community, but also to readily and independently learn new ones, or switch back to another system of operation if they were to revisit a past context.

That said, we must also recognize that students in TNHE are very likely to be living in more than one culture at the same time; potentially an American/Western academic culture, as well as a totally separate social culture; be it popular, national, ethnic, or other. We then must recognize systemic factors of these simultaneously occurring social contexts which influence our
educational activities for students in this area. Fawley (2007) for instance points out that cultural differences in the way individuals are expected to contribute to community success may lead to unusual psychological pressure for some students to provide unauthorized assistance to a struggling friend or family member. This challenge creates a valuable opportunity for addressing a learning objective like “understand that intellectual property is a legal and social construct that varies by culture” (ACRL, “Information Has Value”) through the same process of allowing students to examine variation in values and priorities across communities, and to make the associated information processes and pressures explicit.

**Information Literacy and Writing Across Intellectual Traditions [B]**

TNHE contexts provide a wonderful opportunity for educators to encounter a diverse array of intellectual habits and traditions which may or may not readily correspond to the traditions and habits of mind with which we are already familiar or wish to inculcate in learners. We will discuss some examples of this where the use of writing conventions and the interpretation of evidence is concerned.

The WPA Framework states that “conventions facilitate reading by making material easier to comprehend and creating common expectations between reader and writer” (2011, 9). When addressing variations in style and convention, we tend to focus on disciplines. The ACRL Framework emphasizes across its frames the differences in authority, argumentation, and documentation that exist between academic disciplines and to which students should be attuned. We would argue that while attending to differences in discipline is valuable and necessary, there is also value in attending to the varying standards and conventions found across national and academic cultures. The French, for instance, are known to structure essays and articles in ways
which are very distinct from what we are used to in the United States. In a French academic article, conclusions are often revealed as “a surprise”, whereas in US academic articles, they are of course revealed at the outset in an abstract or introduction. This difference has been attributed to a culture where readers are responsible for understanding the material rather than writers being responsible for making the material clear with conventions like foreshadowing and signposting (Dahl 2004).

Students from various cultures and countries in TNHE are likely to find that what they have been told before about the best way to write is potentially wrong in the new setting. Notably, however, the WPA Framework does not give us the objective of making students proficient with any specific conventions; rather, it states that “correct use of conventions is defined within specific contexts and genres” (2011, 9). The overall goal is to help students identify which conventions are needed in a given context and how to deploy them. As such, this standard could easily be adopted in France. Harkening back to our previous mention of variation theory in learning, we can then view the diverse experiences of writing and argumentation which students bring with them into our context as a golden opportunity for them to actually experience variety and be able to compare and contrast the components and purposes of writing across these settings.

The interpretation of evidence for use in argumentation is a closely related area which can be very challenging to teach. At the same time, it may never have been more important than it is now in the era of information overload and 24/7 media and communication. Both the ACRL and WPA Frameworks give explicit attention to the evaluation of sources. The ACRL’s frame “Authority is Constructed and Contextual” deals directly with the evaluation of sources, while the “Scholarship as Inquiry” frame invites scholars to evaluate the relative significance of
contributions to knowledge. The WPA Framework meanwhile asks learners to “evaluate sources for credibility, bias, quality of evidence, and quality of reasoning” (2011, 7). The rules for conducting an evaluation and the intellectual processes necessary to discern truth and reliability, however, also vary across intellectual traditions and knowledge domains.

These Frameworks leave it to the educators and practitioners in a given context to determine what specific criteria should be used to evaluate various types of information sources. Librarians are already very skilled at the development of sophisticated evaluation rubrics meant to draw a student’s attention to the publisher, author, date of publication, or other source metadata for evaluation. Additionally, we rely on familiar processes like peer review to make us comfortable that a source is trustworthy. However, there exist a range of criteria and evaluation processes for different types of knowledge in diverse contexts that are likely less familiar to the average US-based educator and more familiar to students in TNHE settings.

One of the knowledge domains with special rules for interpretation is religion. In Islam, for instance, there is an entire branch of religious scholarship called fiqh (jurisprudence), with very structured rules and procedures for critically analyzing sources, interpreting evidence, and applying logic to reach conclusions about the religion and its mandates. These standards—which could be considered a curriculum for Islamic information literacy—have no common equivalent in Western traditions, but there are certainly parallels to be drawn between some of the interpretive processes found within this schema and other religious evidence-discerning processes such as biblical exegesis. Some specific examples of evidence put to use in this tradition which we can use to illustrate concern hadith and the practice of interpretation, or tafsir.

Hadith, or sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, are categorized as being reliably true or untrue based on the chain of communication. The rules of evidence here dictate that the
words must be traceable through a chain of reliable persons who lead directly back to the Prophet himself; and even if this condition is satisfied, a new hadith must be rejected if it is contrary to what other reliable sources have reported. This evaluation process gives weight to precedence and tradition in the interpretation of new evidence. In addition, *tafsir*, the practice of interpretation of religious evidence, can only be authoritatively conducted by an exegete after mastering a particular set of information-related knowledge and abilities; such as understanding the system of deriving and communicating religious legal rulings. Interpretations must rely on established categories of sources which can be used in certain ways and are given precedence over each other in a certain hierarchy, and these include sources from Christianity and Judaism which report on many of the same persons and events as in Islamic sources, and are thus treated as corroborating; as well as Arabic literature and poetry for linguistic analyses of other sources.

This short description is just scratching the surface of a long and complex intellectual tradition which likely influences the way that people who think in this tradition subsequently experience other forms of evidence and argument. However, these rules also make it fairly clear that your average person is not a qualified exegete, and therefore must simply learn from the experts and repeat. Weber et al. explain the considerations of teaching writing at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar on top of Islamic educational traditions that may have instilled habits in students of avoiding any confrontation with, or questioning of, authority (2015, loc. 1811).

Other domains of knowledge, such as the study of law, are likely to be familiar to readers and call up their own distinctive rules and practices for interpreting evidence and evaluating sources, testimony, and literature.

The clear need for multiple sets of “habits of mind” and evaluative processes in order to approach different knowledge domains, such as religion and civil law, as well as to communicate
across academic cultures, makes us believe that there are likely many other diverse intellectual traditions and habits which may be unearthed by practitioners applying these Frameworks in a transnational context. However, approaching the Framework objectives by experiencing variation across domain-specific information practices in teaching may also be of interest to domestic practitioners. There are a plethora of sub-national, domain-specific information literacy standards in use within the United States, such as the American Association of Law Libraries’ “Legal Research Competencies and Standards for Law Student Information Literacy” (AALL 2012) and ACRL’s “Information Literacy Competency Standards for Nursing” (ACRL 2013) which presumably were created to address unique information needs within those communities of practice. The ACRL and WPA Frameworks as written both create a significant amount of space to incorporate and address diverse intellectual and evidentiary traditions which may be useful both for practitioners in transnational contexts, as well as those working in sub-national cultures and contexts within the United States.

Using Transnational Practice to Inform Domestic Practice [A]

In addition to the parallels between transnational and sub-national contexts identified in the previous section, there are many other commonalities between TNHE programs and their domestic counterparts. For instance, despite the distinctive issues around academic honesty and plagiarism that Fawley identifies, she also argues that students “plagiarize for the same reasons they do in other parts of the world: poor time management, a reluctance or inability to think critically, and laziness” (2007, 73). Likewise, practitioners in traditional, domestic higher education settings have for many years sought to identify and address the unique needs of international students—those who travel from overseas to study at the home campus of an
institution, and who may bring many of the same characteristics regarding language and academic culture to their learning experience. In addition to student characteristics, the culture and politics of a higher education institution influence how curriculum is adopted, implemented, and deployed. Library practitioners in TNHE settings were asked in a recent study whether the ACRL Framework could be effectively employed in their workplace. Participants named barriers to implementation such as their own colleagues’ resistance to change; the teaching philosophy of the institution at which they worked; and limitations on time to develop and deliver curriculum (Salaz and MacGregor 2015). These challenges might be found anywhere, in any institution, around the world. Thus, it seems likely that practitioners in TNHE stand to learn a great deal from research on international students and from the current developments in practice of their peers in domestic settings who are also trying to adapt, customize, and apply these frameworks for their institutions. At the same time, more attention and structured inquiry is needed in transnational contexts to further develop practices and understandings for effective teaching and learning. Practitioners in domestic settings stand to learn just as much from these new directions in inquiry, and we see great potential for partnerships between the two constituencies in the preparation of tomorrow’s globalized scholars.

Conclusions [A]

Curriculum guidelines such as the ACRL and WPA Frameworks are likely to continue being produced and deployed within national or regional contexts in order to specifically address the locally determined political and economic objectives of higher education systems. At the same time, the transnationalization of higher education delivery is likely to continue expanding and accelerating, with the United States representing a significant share of the transnational
market. The use of the ACRL and WPA Frameworks for teaching and learning in transnational contexts is likely to continue and increase, in spite of the national focus. However, this does not preclude these Frameworks from being deployed effectively outside of the United States. Moreover, as we have discussed, the transnational context in fact presents numerous unique opportunities to develop the writing and information literacy abilities of students and scholars through the application of variation theory to teaching and learning.

The factors affecting information literacy and postsecondary writing in TNHE settings which will require additional attention from practitioners and administrators include accreditation, language and language bias, variation in students’ scholastic backgrounds, variation in students’ prior intellectual habits, and parallel academic and knowledge traditions. As involvement with transnationalization by American higher education institutions continues to grow, the professional associations charged with the development and revision of these Frameworks may wish to adopt a deliberate approach to recognizing these factors and taking steps to acknowledge and support educators outside of the United States. The curriculum we deliver to students around the world must inculcate in them the knowledge, skills, values, and habits that make these Frameworks uniquely American, but without requiring students to sacrifice or exclude other intellectual habits. We must acknowledge the validity of different structures for creating knowledge and evaluating evidence in order to situate and teach our own. The future scholar will certainly have to master the rules of engagement in global and digital scholarship, to cultivate particular habits of mind, and to learn how to be a persuasive contributor in tomorrow’s knowledge economies, objectives that are especially urgent within the academic peripheries. The most successful future scholars will be able to carry out this work across and
between cultures and contexts; and of course we, as educators, whether situated in transnational or domestic practice, must be able to teach them how to do so.

Endnotes [A]

1. This refers to the absence of a widely recognized institution-level accreditor providing peer review to institutions globally.

2. EFL is generally used to refer to the study of English as a foreign language in a non-immersive environment, such as a learner’s home country where English is not the official language. This term is selected for use in discussing transnational contexts as opposed to ESL, which is generally used to refer to the study of English as a second language in an immersive environment, such as where non-native speakers of English study and live in an English-speaking country like the United States. The authors recognize that research drawing from both traditions is distinctive, yet the areas can inform one another.

References [A]


www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.


"What Matters? Shaping Meaningful Learning through Teaching Information Literacy."  


