



AMICAL 2019

AMICAL Consortium's 16th annual meeting and conference took place at the beautiful campus of the American University in Cairo, March 30 -April 1, 2019. This year's theme was "*Openness in teaching and research: Broadening our horizons for the digital future.*" The program focused on openness in all its expressions – from open access publishing, to open educational resources and practices, to openness as a liberal arts value – as well as on many other topics relevant to AMICAL's members. AUCA was represented by a team of faculty members, librarians and technologists.

AUCA presentations at [AMICAL 2019](#)

About AMICAL

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- [Implementing VoxVote activities in teaching and learning interdisciplinary courses](#) by Ekaterina Galimova, General Education Department
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- [Teaching old traditions with new technology: The AK-YN project at AUCA](#) by James Plumtree, General Education Department & Anguelina Popova, CTLT
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[AMICAL](#) is a consortium of American international liberal arts institutions, working together on common goals for libraries, technology and learning. AMICAL brings together 29 institutions of higher education from 22 countries across Eastern, Central and Western Europe, West and North Africa, the Middle East, Central and Southern Asia, and Russia. Operating in diverse cultural contexts but committed to the American model of liberal education, AMICAL institutions have chosen to collaborate to support the advancement of learning and teaching.

[Small Grants Program](#) supports professional development and projects related to digital liberal arts, digital scholarship, digital collections, digital pedagogy, and library innovation.

[AMICAL Connect](#) - online discussion & collaboration platform. Registration is required.

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Aisuluu Namasbek kyzy & Shirin Tumenbaeva, Sociology Instructors

"AMICAL 2019 was a great platform to share the experience of introducing OER in our classes. We presented the progress on the involvement of students in creating content as OER during Community Idea Exchange sessions. In our "General Sociology for non-Sociologists" class we encourage our students to produce works that tackle the pressing social issues in Central Asia and interpret them through sociological concepts and theories. This is a great opportunity to help our students to put in practice their theoretical knowledge and share their experience with their peers.



Being able to present our work helped to get valuable comments and suggestions from our colleagues. We were encouraged to continue working on our project and came to appreciate the help of our students and Library of AUCA for shared enthusiasm in these plans. Additionally, we found particularly interesting and useful the workshops, sessions and keynote speeches related to OER and its role across AMICAL network. This event and knowledge gained will help us to improve our understanding and practices of OER in our own institution."

Maya Sharsheeva, CTLT & Aijamal Sarybaeva, General Education Department

"AMICAL Conference 2019 in Cairo, Egypt has inspired us to become more committed to open and transparent digital research, teaching, and learning across all humanities disciplines. It was a great opportunity for us to learn more about open scholarship, digital collections, new methods of digital pedagogy, and many other innovative teaching and research methods. Overall, the conference, particularly our session - Birds of a Feather - was an impetus for us to re-think and re-assess our own research project on student E-portfolio, as we received many insightful suggestions and recommendations based on the experiences of our colleagues from different institutions. The value of this experience for us is that AMICAL brought together faculty, librarians, archivists, university administrators, and experts in IT technologies, who encouraged us to look at our project from many different perspectives. We feel very privileged to become a part of a scholarly society that is dedicated to support excellence in innovative and effective teaching, research, professional development, and collaboration."

Marie Hakenberg, General Education Department

"I participated at the annual AMICAL Conference for the first time, presenting the class project 'Mapping the Sacred'. The conference was a great experience. It was a privilege to meet so many engaged colleagues from the other American international universities as well as AUCA. Hearing from the attendees about their projects was very inspiring as well as their feedback on my initiative was very valuable. Many thanks to the organizers for arranging this engaging event. And thanks as well as to everyone at AUCA who is contributing continuously to support and extend this networking initiative!"



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James Plumtree, General Education Department

“At the AMICAL Conference at Cairo, with Anguelina Popova I presented ‘Teaching Old Traditions with New Technology’. One of the great things about AMICAL is the sheer range of helpful responses. You can



present a study, having the impression that all that can be done has been done, and, in a moment or two, discover that there are so many more fresh avenues to continue. Present material that you expect no one to be able to assist with – an obscure century-old publication from a far-flung location, a damaged notebook with a minuscule script unedited from an archive – and an array of helpful suggestions and comments soon appear. An archivist offers advice about how to take better photos. A librarian

explains about the handwriting in a difficult manuscript. An expert on Arabic printing gives thoughts about who to ask about early twentieth century publication formats. A teacher inquires how to use such materials in class – and, tantalizingly, asks about how to start a similar project...”

Aida Abdykanova, Anthropology Department

“Within our program we have worked on development and research of small-scale projects as a part of learning process. As a result, we had large corpora of data represented mostly by digital files. As we faced the challenges of data management and storage, AUCA Library helped to find a solution of keeping and representing these data in digital form. In addition to storing and displaying data, we can make it a part of open resources. At AMICAL 2019 we presented the outcomes of student and faculty research project dedicated to collecting of oral stories about the 1916 Uprising in Kyrgyzstan. It was very interesting to get new ideas, comments and recommendations on how all these data can be used in the future, and what information can be revealed with help of the new research direction based on the data already obtained. My intuitive feelings about importance of preserving these primary sources for future research were fully supported. I would like to express my gratitude to the AMICAL conference organizing committee, our Library, CTLT and IT Departments for all their help and support. “

Tamo Chattopadhyay, Institute of Education

“AMICAL 2019 at Cairo was a wonderful opportunity to learn about creative ways the library, faculty and technology colleagues from AMICAL network institutions are integrating digital resources in teaching and learning at their institutions. I presented a Lightning Talk on the potential of Digital Humanities resources and methodologies in enabling curricular collaboration across AMICAL institutions. In my presentation I explored how faculty, library, and technology professionals from various AMICAL network institutions might collaborate in synergistic ways to develop and sustain new modalities of globally connected “one-world-classrooms”. I discussed what kinds of curricular framing, library roles and technological linkages might optimize the pedagogical trade-offs to teach and learn about some of the most pressing global issues confronting humanity. AMICAL was also about making new friends. One of the most positive experiences of the AMICAL 2019 in Cairo for me was to find that so many like-minded colleagues in different AMICAL institutions across the globe were already using digital resources and approaches for curricular collaboration and teaching-learning enrichment within their own institutions. “

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Jyldyz Bekbalaeva & Elena Turdieva, Library

“AMICAL is a great network of collaborators among libraries, academic departments, instructional technology units and IT. We presented preliminary results of the current study of the [AUCA library](#) space use. We are using visual ethnography method for this with active students’ involvement. Library space involves many aspects and we need to be ready to provide comfortable study environment while recognizing students’ need for privacy. Libraries across AMICAL network face similar issues and challenges with space use, so it is always good to discuss and to hear feedback from peers.

AUCA Library serves as the liaison between AMICAL and AUCA community. During the current academic year, we have worked with our Sociology faculty in adopting OER materials and have collaborated with Anthropology program to create digital collections. The results of both projects were also presented in the AMICAL 2019 program.”

Ekaterina Galimova, General Education Department

“AMICAL 2019 conference conducted at the American University of Cairo (AUC) was like the oasis of innovative ideas in the digital world. It gathered together the brightest people from various countries all over the world. It helped me learn what digital software my colleagues from the American Universities in other countries apply within the framework of their own courses. At first, I was inspired by the pre-conference workshops “[Borderless design: Collaboratively designing creative solutions to our challenges](#)” conducted by [Nadine Aboulmagd](#), [Maha Bali](#), Fady Morcos, [Hoda Mostafa](#) & [Reham Niazi](#). Their inspiring videos and ideas on how to evolve creative thinking inspired me to apply in my work. I cannot help mentioning enthusiastic and friendly atmosphere that prevailed at the conference. Participants were very open to share their handouts and power point presentations. I have got acquainted with colleagues who would wish to start collaborative projects with me. Presentations of such speakers as [Jamalieh Haley](#), [Chad Briggs](#), [Laura Kelly](#) boosted my brain activity and gave me food for thought to use digital tools in teaching EFL. Being a speaker of *Community Idea Exchange* section, I was provided with the opportunity to share my experience in implementing VoxVote (VV) voting platform in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), which can also be used in interdisciplinary teaching to highly develop cognitive abilities of students. The attendees got general information of what VV is, how to sign up for it, and various ways to use it in teaching their own courses. The audience not only watched some samples of VV projects conducted within the framework of the First Year Seminar: English for Liberal Arts in 2018-19, but also participated in the VV project right there. Therefore, the attendees had a chance to try the VV platform in action and noted that it was very easy in use. Some professors liked that VV could be used in various interactive contests between two or three sections or even universities simultaneously; whereas librarians noted that they would like to use the VV platform in their own presentations.”

