

CENTER FOR ARABIC STUDY ABROAD

**FINAL REPORT OF THE FULL YEAR PROGRAM
9/2009-5/2010**

**ARABIC LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO**

**NEVENKA KORICA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgments	2
1. Administration and Teaching Staff	4
2. The CASA Fellows	4
3. The Academic Program	4
A. The Fall Semester	4
B. The Spring Semester	5
4. CASA II Program	6
A. The Fall Semester	6
B. The Spring Semester	6
5. The Cultural Program	8
A. Cairo Area Sites	8
B. Major Excursions	9
6. Testing	9
8. Reflections on the program	10
 <u>APPENDICES:</u>	
I. Teaching Staff	12
II. Oral Interview Scores	15
III. Entrance-Exit Exam Scores	16
IV. Biographies	17

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Special thanks are due to The American University in Cairo (AUC) President, Mr. David Arnold and Dr. Lisa Anderson, Senior Vice President and Provost for their continuous care and guidance. Their appreciation of CASA was a major factor in the success of the program. CASA would also like to express its appreciation to the administration at AUC for its support: Vice President for Finance and Administration, Mr. Andrew Snaith; Vice Provost and Dean of Summer School, Dr. Ali Hadi; and Director and Assistant Director of Projects and Grants Development, Dr. Michael Lewis and Ms. Nevine Seif, respectively.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the Arabic Language Institute (ALI) administration and staff. Thanks are due to Mrs. Jehan Allam, ALU Director; and Ms. Margaret Varoujan, Assistant to the ALI Chair. Inside the CASA office, I am fortunate to have worked with Ms. Wassima Al-Shafie, CASA Program Coordinator, as well as CASA's junior secretary Hany Yousry, and CASA student assistant Muhib Nassif.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the U.S. Department of Education, the CASA Consortium members, the Fulbright Commission, the Ford Foundation, and the Mellon Foundation for their continuous support of CASA.

This year, special thanks are also due to our external evaluators, Dr. Martha Schulte-Nafeh and Dr. Kirk Belnap for their thorough work on evaluating the program and for all their valuable recommendations for program improvement.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all of the CASA teachers for all their hard work and for a job done well beyond the call of duty. The faculty of CASA remains the main reason behind CASA's continuing success.

1. ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHING STAFF

In Cairo, Dr. Zeinab Taha continued to serve as CASA Co-Director and Ms. Nevenka Korica continued as CASA's Executive Director. In the fall semester, Mr. Hany Yousry was serving in the capacity of Program Coordinator in the absence of Ms. Wassima Al- Shafie who was on leave. In the spring, Wassima resumed the duties of CASA Program Coordinator, and Mr. Hany Yousry was promoted to secretary. Mr. Muhib Nassif continued to serve as a student assistant.

2. THE CASA FELLOWS

There were 24 full-year fellows this year and they came from the following universities: Harvard University, Princeton University, The University of Maryland, The University of Texas at Austin, The University of Pennsylvania, Georgetown University, Yale University, Duke University, The University of California, Brown University, Brigham Young University, The University of Virginia, John Hopkins University, The University of Michigan, Indiana University, The University of North Carolina, and The University of Kansas.

3. THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM (9/2009-5/2010)

A. Fall Semester (9/6/2009-12/17/2010):

The academic program in the fall consisted of 20 contact hours per week. Each fellow was required to take three core courses: Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (6 hrs./wk.); Reading and Vocabulary Building (7 hrs./wk.); and Listening and Speaking (5 hrs./wk.). In addition, fellows were required to attend a series of lectures in Arabic on a variety of topics chosen by the students for their relevance to Arabic studies and Egyptian culture. The lecture series was organized in collaboration with CASA teachers. They were introduced periodically by one of the CASA teachers. The following is a complete list of these lectures.

Date	Topic	Lecturer
11/10	"Egyptian Education System and Standards"	Dr. Soad Basyouni
11/12	"Discussion on the book "Taxi"	Mr. Khaled El-Khamisi
11/23	"Popular Culture"	Mr. Hossam Baghat
12/8	"Culture in Language"	Mr. Ahmed Abdel Hameed

The Modern Standard Arabic classes (Reading and Vocabulary Building, and Listening and Speaking) were divided into four sections. Students were placed in classes according to their level of proficiency in each area. The students' placement was determined by the Executive Director in consultation with teachers based on their

performance in the summer classes and on reading and listening placement exams. The exams were given to the students during the last week of the summer session. The reading and vocabulary building class aimed at improving students' reading comprehension while also expanding their vocabulary. Emphasis was placed on strengthening language skills, and much attention was given to helping students excel in their knowledge of the derivational system so they could increasingly use it to guess meanings of words and decrease their reliance on a dictionary. Students were further trained in skimming to extract the general sense of a passage, while working on comprehending details through close reading was especially emphasized. As for the weekly written assignments, emphasis was placed on accuracy in terms of spelling, grammar, and discourse.

Teachers selected literary works from different Arab countries according to students' reading levels for the weekend readings, thus addressing the aesthetic elements of the readings. Literary selections, principally novels and short stories, were supplemented with newspaper articles and texts on social, cultural, political, and economic issues. Teachers also devoted class time to vocabulary building exercises, and designed quizzes to help students practice and reinforce newly acquired vocabulary.

The Listening and Speaking class had four sections as well. This class aided students in developing their proficiency in both listening to and speaking Modern Standard Arabic. The class made significant use of audio and video materials from Egyptian television and radio, as well as from the Arabic programs of the BBC., Al Jazeera, and other sources. Students were required to complete listening exercises at home in addition to oral presentations given in class. These assignments were designed to develop students' overall understanding of listening passages as well as specific comprehension of particular detailed points.

There were also four levels of the Egyptian Colloquial class. The objective of the Colloquial class was to further develop students' proficiency in Egyptian Arabic through challenging listening selections from audio and videotapes, group discussions, individual presentations, and instruction on increasingly complex grammatical structures.

Fall Semester Courses

1. Egyptian Colloquial Arabic: (6 hrs. per week)
 - a) First Group (Advanced) Ms. Nabila Al-Asyouti
 - b) Second Group Ms. Heba Salem
 - c) Third Group Mr. Abeer Hassan
 - d) Fourth Group Ms. Marwa Sultan

2. Reading and Vocabulary Building: (7 hrs. per week)
 - a) First Group (Advanced) Ms. Nadia Harb
 - b) Second Group Ms. Azza Hassanein

c) Third Group	Mr. Ahmed Abdel
Moneuim	
d) Fourth Group	Ms. Ebtisam Orabi
3. <u>Listening and Speaking:</u> (8 hrs. per week)	
a) First Group (Advanced)	Mr. Kaml El-Ekhnawy
b) Second Group	Dr. Iman Soliman
c) Third Group	Ms. Shahira Yacout
d) Fourth Group	Ms. Dina Hosny

B. The Spring Semester (1/5/2010-5/20/2010):

In the spring semester, the number of contact hours was reduced to 12 hours per week in order to give fellows more time for independent readings and concentration on areas of special interest. In addition, students were encouraged to interact with Egyptians in order to practice their Arabic more frequently outside of the classroom. Following the practice of previous years, this semester provided fellows with considerable flexibility in selecting their program of study in the framework of content-based instruction. Egyptian Colloquial Arabic was offered as an elective, and a large number of students enrolled in the two sections of ECA offered during the spring semester. All students were required to enroll in one of the four sections of the required Writing course, plus three other courses of their choice. In early November 2009, the Executive Director met with the students, and together they decided upon classes for the Spring 2010 semester. In early December 2009, the students met with the professors assigned to teach the spring courses and together designed the program of study.

The Writing Course: The writing course was the only obligatory course for all students during the spring semester. Students took a writing placement exam toward the end of the fall semester in order to place students in the appropriate levels. There were four sections of the writing class, all of which emphasized accuracy in expression, in addition to further developing the students' ability to express their ideas in Arabic. The course offered extensive training on different writing styles in Arabic, such as description, argumentation, criticism, comparison, and the writing of some official requests/claims. The class met for three hours per week in addition to individual sessions with the writing teachers. Students were required to complete two writing assignments each week, in addition to three exams spread out throughout the semester and a final paper consisting of a minimum of 15 pages.

Spring Semester Courses

Course	Teacher
AVIA 522-01 Advanced Writing	Ms. Azza Hassanein
AVIA 522-02 Advanced Writing	Ms. Dina Hosny
AVIA 522-03 Advanced Writing	Ms. Ibtisam Oraby
AVIA 522-04 Advanced Writing	Mr. Ahmed AbdelHameed
AVIA 501-01 Advanced ECA	Ms. Marwa Sultan

AVIA 501-02 Advanced ECA
AVIA 533-01 Advanced Translation
AVIA 535-01 Media

Ms. Heba Salem
Ms. Shereen El-Ezaby
Ms. Nadia Harb

AVIA 591-01 Modern Arabic Thought
AVIA 591-02 Speaking
AVIA 591-03 Quran
AVIA 591-05 Modern Arabic Literature
AVIA 591-06 Criticism
AVIA 591-07 Gender Studies
AVIA 591-08 Grammar
AVIA 591-09 Iraqi Colloquial Arabic

Dr. Ashraf El-Shereef
Mr. Kamal El-Ekhnawy
Dr. Mohamed Salama
Dr. Hussein Hammouda
Dr. Saeed Al-Wakil
Dr. Riham Bahi
Mr. Ahmed Abdel Hameed
Mr. Moahmed Serag El-Din

4. CASA II PROGRAM

The CASA II program provides an opportunity for CASA fellows who graduated from CASA I within the past five years, to continue to enhance their language skills. Each fellow spent one to two semesters studying with professors specialized in their fields of interest. The following illustrates the distribution of CASA II fellows over the fall and spring semesters:

A. Fall Semester:

1. Ms. Emma Trentman

Arabic Literature
Hammouda
Advanced ECA

Dr. Hussein

Ms. Abeer Haider

2. Ms. Samantha Rose

Media
AbdelMoneim
Interpreting
AbdelMoneim

Mr. Ahmed

Mr. Ahmed

3. Ms. Claire Panetta

Advanced ECA
Media
Abdelmoneuim
History of Cairo
Ghafar

Ms. Syonara Tmoum

Mr. Ahmed

Mr. Nady Abdel

4. Tania Abbas

Media
moneuim
Advanced ECA
Spoken Fusha

Mr. Ahmed Abdel
Ms. Syonara Tmoum
Ms. Abeer Hassam

B. Spring Semester

1. Ms. Claire Panetta

ECA
Arabic Literature
Khalek
Advanced ECA

Ms. Abeer Hassan
Ms. Amany Abdel
Mr. Adel Orabi

2. Ms. Tania Abbas

ECA
Spoken Fusha
Kahlek
Egyptian Law
Bagoury

Ms. Abeer Hassan
Ms. Amnay Abdel
Ms. Amany El-

3. Samantha Rose

Translation
Moneium
Media
Bagoury

Mr. Ahmed Abdel
Ms. Amany El-

4. Aaron Jakes

ECA
Showman
Manuscripts
Ghazi
Classical Readings
rahman

Mr. Mahmoud
Dr. Emad Abu
Mr. Nadi Abdel

5. THE CULTURAL PROGRAM

The language exchange program that began during the summer resulted in many strong friendships that continued between CASA fellows and their Egyptians peers. Throughout the year, language partners were invited to selected CASA cultural functions where these friendships were allowed to develop and grow.

Another opportunity to strengthen cultural ties with Egyptian youth was provided through two three-hour sessions of dialogues organized with a group of students from Ain Shams University who are members of the Arabic Language club. The meetings were held on the AUC new campus, and students discussed various topics of mutual interest.

There were two ALI/CASA parties: an end-of-semester party held in December and an end-of-year party held in May. Several CASA fellows participated in both parties and took part in poetry recitation, acting, and singing. In addition to these celebrations, the CASA Graduation party was held on May 18th, in the Oriental Hall.

Finally, students were encouraged to participate in a program of organized guided tours. Among them were one-day tours in and around Cairo and eight major excursions to various destinations around Egypt, a detailed listing of which follows:

FALL 2009

A. Cairo Area Sites:

Bus tour of Cairo

Tour of Giza Plateau, including the boat of Khufu and the Tomb of Mere-ankh

Tour of Saqqara and Memphis (including the step-pyramid of Zozer, the Pyramid and Causeway of Unas, the tombs of Ti and the Serapeum)

Tour of the Coptic Museum and the old Cairo area (including the churches of Al-Adhra the “Hanging Church” and St. Sergius, and the Synagogue of Ben Ezra)

Gayer – Anderson Museum, Ibn Tulun Mosque, Sultan Hassan and Mosque of Refaai.

Tour of the remains of Fustat, the Mosque of “ Amr Ibnal-As” and the Nilometer”

Walking tour from Bab il-Futuh to ElHussein (including visits of the Northern Walls, Bayt Suhaymi)

Walking tour from Bab Wazir to Al–Azhar and a visit to the Mosque of al-Azhar

B. Major Excursions:

Trip to Siwa Oasis and Marsa Matruh

A Nile Cruise trip to Aswan, Luxor and Abu Simble

SPRING 2010

A. Cairo Area Sites:

A visit to the Citadel: tour at the Citadel area including the Mosques and Museums.

A visit to the Mamluk City of the dead at the Northern Cemetery.

Guided tour to the Monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul on the Red Sea

B. Major Excursions:

Guided trip to Alexandria : visits to Bibliotheca Alexandria (The revival of the ancient library of Alexandria), some Greco-Roman sites : the Roman Theatre, the Catacomb of Shugafa, the old Roman Theatre of Kom El-Dekka, the Villa of Birds, the Fort of Qaytbay and El-Salalmlek Palace (Royal Palace at El-Montazah).

Trip to El-Menia, one of the three largest and most important cities in middle Egypt. Visiting the convent of the Holy Virgin (Gabal El-Tir), Tell Amarna, Tonah El-Gabal and Beni Hassan.

Trip to St. Catherine's and Sinai.

CASA Graduation Party:

This year, the CASA fellows and their teachers as well as CASA staff celebrated the end of the program by taking a final felucca ride together. In the past several years, it became a common practice to start the program with a felucca ride to give the fellows a chance to bond with their new environment and with other members of the group, and also, to take a final ride together to reminiscence on the journey that the year in the CASA program represents.

6. TESTING

To increase validity and reliability of the final oral proficiency testing, this year CASA asked two external examiners to conduct the oral interviews. They were Dr. Hussein Al-Khafafi, and Dr. Nawal Moussa. The scores on the CASA exit exam show great improvement for the majority of the CASA students. Appendix II includes

both the initial entrance scores and the final exit scores for every student. Students were given an ILR exam that was performed through Skype at the end of the year to measure their improvement with respect to their entrance OPI scores. The scores are reported in Appendix III.

Their reading, listening, and writing exams were corrected at AUC by two professors who had not taught in CASA throughout the year, and they were Dr. Sami Moussa and Dr. Said Alwakil.

7. REFLECTIONS ON THE PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVMENT

These reflections are based on information collected through students' evaluations, class observations, interviews with fellows, and review of the existing curriculum.

The students in the program displayed great commitment to learning Arabic. Some of those who came to Egypt in June with high intermediate to low advanced proficiency levels, left the program with near native fluency. For many, this level of progress and achievement was reflected by their high scores on the Foreign Service-style language exam administered by CASA. Many fellows wrote in their final evaluations that they hold the program in high esteem largely because of the extent of their own progress during the year. By the end of the program, they report that they can easily hold a conversation on a wide range of topics and speak in both colloquial and formal Arabic. They can write research papers on a computer, understand TV programs, and read newspapers with ease.

The majority of fellows think that the curriculum is rigorous. They report that a typical day in the fall semester involves five hours in the classroom and over four hours of homework. The weekends offered little respite because they are assigned homework that includes long compositions and entire Arabic novels. In general, last year's fellows expressed enthusiastic appreciation of their teachers' work, and many comments found in the evaluation forms reveal that the development of rapport between the faculty and fellows is an important factor for the success of the program. Fellows express their deepest gratitude to their teachers whom they often describe as superb educators who bring extreme measures of dedication and enthusiasm into the classroom.

Some suggestions to improve the program for next year, based on students' suggestions would be:

- Develop CASA curriculum, especially during the fall semester, to be more content based and more responding to the individual needs and interests of fellows.

- Lighten the weekend homework load from the reading class, either by providing two weeks for each novel, or assigning prominent short stories and particularly noteworthy excerpts from longer works rather than those longer works themselves. Also, provide a sheet of key words, phrases, and grammatical points of interest that would help CASA's future students to extract specific benefits from otherwise somewhat overwhelming weekend assignments. Also, background information on the novel and the author (short plot summary, introduction of characters, perhaps notes on the author's life and political and social beliefs) would help to situate these novels in their cultural and political contexts, and inform class discussions
- Diversify the course materials and the weekly themes, perhaps including writing and speaking styles and vocabulary registers from other types of media, such as, for example, art installations, stand-up comedy routines, academic lectures, cultural, domestic, and women's magazines, political slogans, blogs and other online media.
- Many students find that it is very difficult to integrate into Egyptian society, which limits their opportunities to form real friendships with people who share their values and interests.
- To achieve a more rigorous organization of the listening course, the curriculum has to be more clearly defined with a weekly syllabus indicating to students and teachers alike what the goals of the listening course are, and how they can be achieved. Also, more materials need to be readily available in the digital format so that the teachers are not spending too much time looking for the materials, and focus on planning how to use them in class in a more effective way instead. For that purpose, the guidelines for the new syllabus design were developed after the fall course and they are going to be implemented next year.

APPENDIX I

Teaching Staff

I. Full-Time Teachers in the ALI*

Name of Teacher	Courses Taught (Semester)
Nabila Al-Asyouti M.A. in TAFL, AUC	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (F)
Kamal Al-Ekhnawy M.A in TAFL, AUC	Listening & Speaking (f) Speaking (S)
Sherine El-Ezabi M.A in TAFL, AUC	Translation (S)
Nadia Harb M.A. in TAFL, AUC	Reading and Vocabulary Building (F) Media (S)
Azza Hassanein M.A. in TAFL, AUC	Reading and Vocab Building (F) Advanced Writing (S)
Hebatalla Salem M.A. in TAFL, AUC	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (F) Advanced ECA (S)
Shahira Yacout M.A.in TAFL, AUC	Listening and Speaking (F)
Ibtesam Oraby M.A. in TAFL, AUC	Reading & Vocabulary Building (F) Writing (S)
Iman Aziz Soliman Ph.D,in TAFL University of Edinburgh	Listening & Speaking (S)
Saeed Al-Wakil	Criticism (S)

* Full-time designates that the teacher is an ALI faculty member who teaches exclusively in the Arabic Language Institute at AUC. Only a fraction (1/3 or occasionally 2/3) of that instructor's teaching is done in CASA. The rest is devoted to other ALI courses.

II. Part-Time Teachers in the ALI*

Name of Teacher	Courses Taught (Semester)
Emad B. Abou-Ghazi Ph.D. in the Science of Manuscript, Cairo University	Manuscripts (S)
Hussein Hamouda Ph.D, Arabic Literature, Cairo University	Modern Arabic Thought (s)
Marwa Sultan M.A. TAFL, AUC	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (F) Advanced ECA (S)
Ashraf El-Sherif Ph.D, Political Science Boston University	Modern Arabic Thought (S)
Mahmoud Showman M.A. TAFL, AUC	ECA (S)
Ahmed Abdel Moneium M.A. TAFL, AUC	Reading & Vocabulary Building (F) Advanced Translation (S)
Abeer Hassan M.A. TAFL, AUC	Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (F) ECA (S)
Amany Abdel Khalek BA, Arabic, Ein shams University	Arabic Literature (S) Spoken Fusha (S)
Amany El-Bagoury BA, Law, Ein Shams University	Egyptian Law (S) Media (S)
Nady Abdel Ghafar M.A. TAFL, AUC	Classical readings (S)
Mohamed Salama Ph.D. Halwan University	Quran (S)
Ahmed Abdel Hameed MA in Arabic language & literature Ein Shams University	Writing (S) Grammar (S)
Adel Orabi MA. TAFL, AUC	ECA (S)
Dina Hosny	Listening & Speaking (F)

MA. TAFL, AUC

Writing (S)

Riham Bahi
Ph.d, International & public Affairs
Boston University

Gender Studies (S)

Mohamed Hassan
MA, Political Science, AUC

Iraqi Colloquial Arabic (S)

*Part-time designates that the teacher is not a permanent member of the ALI. Occasionally such teachers teach exclusively in the ALI, but they are not permitted to carry a full teaching load (15 hrs.). Generally speaking, part-time teachers are full-time employees of other universities or institutes who agree to teach one course for CASA.

APPENDIX II
Oral Interview Scores
Full Year Fellows 2009-2010

Student #	<u>OPI</u>	<u>IRL</u>
Student #1	2	2
Student #2	1+	3
Student #3	2	2+L
Student #4	1+	2+
Student #5	2+	3+L
Student #6	1+	3L
Student #7	2+	3H
Student #8	1+	2
Student #9	2+	2
Student #10	2-	2
Student #11	2-	3
Student #12	2	2
Student #13	1+	2+
Student #14	2	3
Student #15	1+	2
Student #16	2-	3-
Student #17	2-	2+
Student #18	2	3
Student #19	2-	2
Student #20	2	2
Student #21	1	3-
Student #22	2	2
Student #23	1+	2
Student #24	2	3
Student #25	1	2+
Student #26	2-	2+

APPENDIX III
CASA Full-Year Students 2009-2010
CASA Entrance & Exit Exam

Student #	Entrance 02/2009	Exit 05/2010
Student #1	69.52	IC
Student #2	49.36	81.5
Student #3	67.35	82.38
Student #4	58.91	79.63
Student #5	71.20	81.50
Student #6	55.34	85.63
Student #7	66.56	IC
Student #8	52.50	69.25
Student #9	60.64	81.75
Student #10	55.67	77.88
Student #11	21.88	76.38
Student #12	60.08	77.38
Student #13	48.42	68.75
Student #14	49.26	IC
Student #15	52.65	81.75
Student #16	66.05	82
Student #17	56.12	IC
Student #18	64.47	71.13
Student #19	56.87	78.63
Student #20	64.82	80.38
Student #21	63.19	84.75
Student #22	56.15	71.88
Student #23	61.52	68.38
Student #24	71.50	87.78
Student #25	50.71	59.63
Student #26	63.17	81.38

*total score is out of 100 points. IC indicates the student did not take the listening portion of the exit exam

APPENDIX III

Biographies

CASA I Full Year Fellows 2009-2010

Zoe Baer graduated from Duke University in 2008 with a BA in Arabic and Cultural Anthropology. Her interests in Arabic range from calligraphy, second language acquisition to interpretation as a basis of cultural exchange and understanding. She studied Arabic in Syria and Jordan during her undergraduate career and has spent this past year living in Cairo teaching English to primary school students.

Pinchas Balsam is an undergraduate at Princeton University (class of '12). He is majoring in Near Eastern Studies, with a focus on the politics of the Arab World. He has also studied Arabic at Middlebury College.

Carolyn Barnett graduated this year from the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, earning a BSFS in Culture and Politics and a certificate in International Development. She also studied Arabic at Georgetown and spent a semester abroad at AUC. She is particularly interested in contemporary women's rights activism in the Arab world, women's participation in Islamist movements, and the relationship between gender equality and democracy. In the future, she plans to pursue a PhD in political science.

Elliott Bazzano is a PhD student in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He received his MA in the same field from Duke. His research interests include Sufism, Qur'anic Studies, Pluralism, Islam in America, Ethics, Mysticism, Identity, Pedagogy, Narratives, Arabic and Persian. He plans to work as a professor upon completing his doctorate.

Thalia Beaty graduated from Brown University last year with a BA in Middle East Studies. She has studied Arabic in Cairo and at Middlebury previously, and has most recently worked in Washington D.C. for the Center for American Progress. Academically, she has focused on contemporary Arabic literature and has an interest in translation.

Kevin Blankinship holds a B.A. from Brigham Young University and an M.A. from UNC Chapel Hill, both in Comparative Literature. He studied Arabic at both of these institutions, as well as the Middlebury College Summer 2008 Arabic School. He loves pre-modern Arabic literature, especially 'Abbasid belles-lettres and verse, and hopes to pursue a doctorate in Near Eastern Studies with a focus on classical Arabic and Persian poetry.

Scott Cole graduated this year from the University of Virginia with a major in Middle Eastern Studies and a minor in Physics. When he returns to the United States after having completed CASA, he will begin attending Georgetown University in the fall of 2010 to complete a master's degree in Arab Studies. His future plans include completing a doctorate in a discipline related to Middle Eastern Studies, and working

in and with the Middle East in the field of business. In addition to his work with Arabic and the Arab World, an integral component of his career plans is the refinement of his Persian language skills and the continuation of his study of Iran.

Andrew Dilbert received his B.A. in International Comparative Studies from Duke University, with a concentration in Eastern Europe. He is currently an M.A. TEFL candidate at the American University in Cairo, and his thesis is a comparative study on the intonation of Syrian Arabic and American English. He has studied in both Egypt (AUC) and Syria (Damascus University; IFPO-Session annuelle 2008-2009). He is interested in working with civil society in the future.

Gerard Dolan holds a B.A. in Biology from Johns Hopkins University and has worked previously in the Middle East. His interests include U.S. foreign policy and development in the Middle East and North Africa. After CASA I, he plans to pursue a Masters in Middle East Regional Studies.

Omar Foda graduated from Dartmouth College in 2007 with a BA in Modern Middle Eastern History. He is a PhD student in the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations department at the University of Pennsylvania. His academic focus is on Late Ottoman and Early Modern Egyptian history.

Andrew Helms graduated this year from Georgetown University with a MA in Arab Studies from the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. He has studied Arabic in Egypt through the Middle East Studies Program in Agouza, as well as through local Arabic centers. His research interests include Islamist parties, the intersection of new media and contentious politics in the Middle East and theories of authoritarian rule. Following the CASA program, Andrew plans to work for a media and public relations consulting company in the region before pursuing a Ph.D.

Michele Henjum received an MA in Comparative Literature from the CUNY Grad Center in 2007. She's interested in Arabic literature and literary translation, and has studied Arabic in Morocco (ALIF) and Syria (Damascus University, Dalalah Institute).

Rebecca Hopkins is currently pursuing dual-Masters degrees in Middle Eastern Studies and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. She is particularly interested in political economy of the Middle East, oil politics, and political relations between the US and the Arab world. She has previously studied Arabic in Cairo (at AUC), Amman (at the Qasid Institute), and Emory University.

Anita Husen is an MA in Candidate of Arabic Studies at the University of Texas Austin. Her academic interests are pedagogy, contemporary literature and the relationship between language and culture/sociolinguistics. Prior to her graduate work, Anita served in the Peace Corps in Morocco where she was a health volunteer at a rural Tamazigh clinic. She holds a BA in Middle East Studies from Emory University. Anita studied Arabic at Middlebury in 2005 and 2008.

Nancy Linthicum is a first-year student in the Arabic Language and Literature PhD program in the University of Michigan's Near Eastern Studies department. She is interested in postcolonial North African literature, particularly the short story, and the use of dialect and other native languages, such as Berber, in fiction. Nancy received her B.A. from Barnard College, Columbia University in Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures and English Literature.

Karol W. Malik graduated this year from Harvard University with a B.A. in Human Evolutionary Biology and a Language Citation in Arabic. His current academic interests focus on the role that poetic traditions across various cultures -- especially in Eastern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East -- play in informing the tone of public discourse.

Kevin Mazur is currently pursuing an MA at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He has previously studied Arabic in Syria (Damascus University) and Egypt (AUC) and worked as a volunteer in the Damascus branch of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Kevin's academic interests center around the political economy of the Arab world.

Nathaniel Miller graduated with a BA in English from St. Olaf College in 2002. In 2005 he completed his MA in English from Indiana University, where he also studied Arabic language and literature with a FLAS. He began a PhD focusing on 18th century Orientalism, but decided to focus exclusively on Arabic instead, moving to Egypt in 2007, where he's been ever since. He's interested in the relationship between Jahiliyya poetry and the advent of Islam. He hopes to pursue a PhD in Arabic literature.

Olivia Moseley received her BA in History and German Studies from Vassar College (2004) and lived in Cairo for 3 years (2004-2007), studying Arabic at ALI-AUC and working as a freelance editor and writer. She is currently in the joint MA-PhD program in Arab Studies (MA 2009) and History at Georgetown University. She focuses on women and gender in the colonial and post-colonial Middle East, with a special interest in Egyptian feminist movements.

Todd Mostak graduated in December 2006 from the University of North Carolina with a BA in Economics and Anthropology. He then taught English for a year in Syria, where he made his first foray into Arabic. After completing CASA, he plans on entering the MA program in Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard, where he hopes to study competing notions of nationalism in Lebanon.

Andrea Richardson graduated this year from Brown University with a B.A. in Middle East Studies. In addition to her Arabic studies at Brown University, Andrea has studied Arabic at Middlebury's Summer Arabic Language School and at Middlebury's Arabic School Abroad in Alexandria, Egypt where she completed a four month home-stay with an Egyptian family. In particular, Andrea is interested in recording female narratives of forced migration and community building in the Middle East. In the future, she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Modern Middle Eastern History.

Johanna Sellman is currently a doctoral student in the department of Comparative Literature at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds a BA in French literature (2001) and an MA in Middle Eastern Studies (2006). She has studied and lived in Morocco previously and she completed the CASA Egypt summer program in 2008. Johanna is currently embarking on a dissertation project on Iraqi exile literature in Europe and the Middle East.

Dustin John Stephenson-Reynolds graduated this year from the University of Kansas with a B.A. in French Literature. He has studied Arabic at Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, as well as the American Language Institute in Fes, Morocco. He is interested in contemporary Arabic literature, as well as linguistics. After completing CASA, he plans on pursuing graduate studies in the field of Arabic language and literature.

Nathan Tek graduated in 2009 from Yale University with a BA in Political Science and International Studies. Academically, he is particularly interested in US foreign policy in the Maghreb. After completing CASA, he will pursue an advanced degree in international relations and hopes to work for the US federal government in the future.