**INTERNATIONAL
VIRTUAL
EXCHANGE
CONFERENCE**

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Editor

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International collaborations and networking remain an essential mode of visibility for institutions as it promotes skills and technology transfer, develops staff and students' competencies. However, due to resources challenges in engaging in physical mobility and exchange, it is often problematic for universities in most African countries to benefit from exchange programmes that involve the physical movement of people. Virtual exchange and mobility are an antidote to this challenge. To explore the role of virtual exchanges in promoting collaboration between universities in Africa, developed, and other developing countries, six universities from five countries (Germany, Ghana, Kenya, Portugal and the USA) in 2013 initiated a virtual project dubbed "Building Bridges Across Continents."

Since its inception, the project has connected about 400 students and six faculty members through the use of Web 2.0 tools. Among other things, the students have discussed and worked on group projects on several multidisciplinary topics. During the project, students learn to work collaboratively online, appreciate cultural diversity and differences, schedule and manage meetings, conduct desk research and work with different digital tools. From the results, key findings emerged showing that students increased cultural awareness and networking, enhanced their communication abilities, and improved management of an international project, creative skills, data analysis and reporting. Other findings include listening to native and non-native speakers of English, time management skills, handling conflicts, self-confidence, compromise and negotiation as well as perception about other cultures.

The project has three unique qualities including content (cultural awareness across countries), pedagogy (student-centered learning) and the application of technology (digitally empowered tools that create flexibility and make learning a fun process). The project has application for virtual exchanges and collaborating across countries, especially where there are financial, legal barriers to physical mobility and movement.

Virtual exchange flourishes in difficult times: Reflection from emerging environment

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The students at Durban University of Technology (Durban, South Africa) suffer unemployment, economic crisis, inequality, load shedding, lack of data and gadgets, poor internet access, and the like. Most of them live in distant rural areas with poor public transportation. Despite all these aggravating circumstances, which are emphasized by the actual pandemic, they have been very engaged into several COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) projects, which I have arranged with my respected colleagues from high education institutions in Mexico, Brazil, China, and the United States of America (USA), during the past three years. More precisely, within seven different COIL projects, we managed to join ordinary *non-joinable* disciplines, like: Electronic Navigation, Logistics, Research Methodology, and Research Project (on South African side), with Navigation (on Brazilian side); HCI, UX, User-Centered Design, and Computer Engineering (on Mexican side); English as Foreign Language (on Chinese side); Public speaking, English Composition, and Critical Thinking (on the USA side). The participants have been using English as a common platform for mutual understanding, even though their native languages are Serbo-Croatian, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, Georgian, and Nepali. We have accomplished these multi- and cross-disciplinary projects with great success and on behalf of all parties involved. In addition to common *bilateral* COILs, last year we accomplished successfully the first *trilateral* COIL project between South Africa, Mexico, and China. Currently, we are working on a *four parties* COIL project, entitled "Cultural Adaptation in the Context of Global e-Business", which involves partners from South Africa, Mexico, China and the USA. This is an innovative and inspirational journey, through which we learn from each other and uplift our knowledge; teamwork, digital, intercultural awareness and communication skills. Mutual understanding and empathy, as well as our global emotional intelligence rise with each COIL project. We, in South Africa, realized that our colleagues from different parts of the world, experience job losses, economic insecurity, and alienation. Regardless of all these challenges amplified by the pandemic, we continue to work together and communicate via Trello, Padlet, Wordpress, Canvas, Slack, Flipgrid, Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, etc. The students lead these projects, while the professors are responsible for facilitation in attaining new knowledge, cognitive and communication skills, instead of simple *unidirectional* transfer of knowledge. Thanks to the experiences acquired through these projects, the professors published in close collaboration several journal and conference papers, created several posters, and gave numerous presentations on international virtual engagement through different webinars. We do believe that COIL projects will pave the way for advanced, more resilient, and accessible higher education in the near future, which will be global, dominantly technology-driven, life-long, collaborative, and inclusive.

Key words: COIL, virtual exchange, multi-disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, global emotional intelligence.

Learning from Indigenous Peoples: Creating Virtual Collaborative and Safe Spaces for Cross-Cultural and Transnational Exchange

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> It has been a dream of mine to connect with Indigenous people around the globe. We have historical similarities, but we all have identities that make us unique. It's important to have a network of Indigenous peoples. We're expanding our knowledge of who we are, and this empowers us to speak up for issues that matter to us.
>
> -Indigenous student participant,
> International Indigenous Student Exchange Program, January 2020.

Understanding that Indigeneity transcends regional and national contexts, this program provides opportunities for dialogue and collaboration among Indigenous students at York and their peers in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and the Philippines on a variety of topics, including knowledge systems, languages, ecologies, political movements, spiritualities, and identities. The pilot program ran 8 weeks of online workshops with lectures and facilitated discussions. We are currently in our second iteration of 25 students, with the program running as a 13-week course for university credit, with the addition of two university partners in Australia. This program was made possible with the support of Canada's Outbound Student Mobility Program Innovation Fund and in collaboration with the York University community and international partners.

Our objectives are to increase access and participation of self-identified Indigenous students in international study opportunities as part of their academic program; promote knowledge-sharing and collaboration among Indigenous students in Canada and their peers in other nations; and contribute towards addressing the knowledge gap between and among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and communities. We acknowledge that Western academic institutions have historically silenced and continue to moderate Indigenous voices. As such, it is vital to build a collaborative, safe space for student participants, facilitators, and faculty partners to learn, share, and reflect together.

This presentation shares the lessons we are learning from the program. Guided by Indigenous principles of respect, reciprocity, responsibility, relevance, and relationships, the program provides a safe virtual learning environment for cross-cultural and transnational exchanges. A key component for creating dialogue is group projects comprised of students from different nations. Using a range of formats, such as Instagram essays, digital magazines, beadwork, and short films, students explore the topics of the course and present their projects at a public Knowledge Fair. We have structured the course to be safe and inviting for Indigenous students to share their lived experiences. Indigenous leadership is vital. Most required readings and guest speakers are by Indigenous scholars. Non-Indigenous allies work behind the scenes to provide assistance and navigate university and administrative structures. It has been incredible to witness the students connecting and mutually supporting one another, building networks, and creating unity. Indigenous students have strengthened their pride in their identities within the program, explained by one participant:

I am thankful to be a part of the program, it makes me grow as an Indigenous woman, be proud of my ancestors and my traditions. Also, learning about other culture was amazing and knowing that in some cases we share some traditions.

Accredited Mobility for European Sustainable Higher Education innovation implementing Virtual Exchange

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Due to current challenges and limitations affecting onsite teaching and physical mobility, the great majority of universities in Europe and globally are exploring tools and methods to guarantee continuous engagement of students and their active participation online, as well as complementary ways to provide them with an intercultural and international experience, in addition to physical mobility. One approach that can help deliver online learning is Virtual Exchange (VE), an innovative pedagogy to enable deep, interactive intercultural learning through online facilitated discussions.

However, universities exploring blended mobility and VE for the first time, as well as those having already gained experience in these activities, still seem to experience two great challenges: i) how to design and implement blended mobility and VE schemes that are inclusive and intercultural, and ii) how to integrate and accredit blended mobility and VE activities as a stable component of their academic offer.

In this context, the FRAMES "Fostering resilience through Accredited Mobility for European Sustainable Higher Education innovation" project (https://frames-project.eu/) is working to foster a harmonised implementation and accreditation of VE, as an integral part of (blended) mobility approaches, among European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), making the European Higher Education Area more innovative, intercultural and resilient.

Under the umbrella of the FRAMES project, while being aware that there are multiple ways in which higher education institutions develop and deliver blended mobility and VE, the consortium collected and analysed existing VE case studies from various sources. The aim was to identify and describe the various scenarios of accredited VEs. By using a pattern analysis methodology in order to extract from different experiences similar patterns that can be applied to every European HEI, the project team aggregated the collected cases into four different scenarios for implementing VE within the educational offer of HEIs, namely 1) as a **preparatory or follow-up activity** to physical mobility, 2) as an **intertwined component** during a physical mobility, 3) as a **stand-alone learning activity** and 4) as a **component of a course.** Additionally, descriptions of the opportunities and challenges linked to each of these four scenarios were also collected. From the examples provided, the analysis shows that the opportunity to obtain credits for a VE module, whether it is part of a core subject or an elective, can affect the motivation of students to take part in the experience.

Looking forward, we would encourage academic staff and administrators to consider other opportunities offered by VE, particularly for internships and placements. We have shown how VE can offer a more inclusive approach to internationalisation by allowing students who would not take part in a physical mobility programme the opportunity to have an international

experience as part of their university studies, and acquire essential transversal skills, such as the ability to work in culturally diverse, and digital settings. This objective underlies also the inclusion of international internships and placements as potential VE opportunities.

Emerging Networks for Enhancing Campus Internationalization. Lessons Learned From "Digital Mobil @ FH Bielefeld"

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Background

The session focuses on the Digital Mobil @ FH Bielefeld Project as part of the DAAD grant entitled International Mobility and Cooperation through Digitalization (IMKD). The grant was awarded to FH Bielefeld in 2019. The project involved forging a global network of universities dedicated to virtual exchanges, according to the following goals:

- Combine cross-cutting issues of internationalization and digitalization in a systematic manner
- Design online teaching formats to allow students gain global experiences
- Give teachers the time, space, opportunity and support to design new teaching formats
- Create technical infrastructure for international cooperation.
- Produce professional and customized teaching materials.
- Reduce administrative barriers for mobility.

The network was comprised of five members:

- Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences (Germany)
- Boise State University (U.S.A.)
- German-Turkish University (Turkey)
- Hallym University (South Korea)
- XAMK University (Finland).

The universities joined this international network with the following motivation:

- Expand internationalization.
- Facilitate student, faculty and research exchanges by providing alternative formats to meet the growingly diverse needs at the university.
- Diversify global learning opportunities and activities.
- Help students become better prepared before physical mobility.
- Follow institutional strategy of digitalization and mobility.

Collaboration was operationalized in four tracks:

1. **Double Degree Collaboration:** The joint program "International Business Management" started in the winter term 2021/22 after receiving accreditation in 2020/21.

2. **Micro-credentials:** Students join selected courses at the other universities in the network. Courses are online and operate with tuition reciprocity. The courses provide a taste of studying abroad and learning in international contexts.

3. **Summer School:** XAMK University hosts the summer school in Finland (or virtually). Universities in the network suggest faculty and students. Course themes have been: 1) artificial intelligence, 2) cybersecurity, 3) Nordic Product Design and 4) entrepreneurial mindset.

4. **Joint Module/Joint Classroom Projects:** The network has supported four joint modules in 1) artificial intelligence, 2) corporate learning and innovation, 3) digital business and 4) business administration.

Table 1. Lesson Learned

Students Perspective	Top two motivators: • Gain new perspectives in the subject area • Meet and work with peers from other countries Challenges: • Time differences (when courses have synchronous components) • Administrative processes (bureaucracy) • Balancing workloads Recommendations: • More opportunities to meet other students in the courses. • More opportunities to engage with teachers.
Faculty Perspective	Communicate expectations to your students: • Course structure • Exam format Make space for student interactions: • Create opportunity for students to get to know each other • Offer peer-to-peer support (tutorials, informal exchange, etc.) Update your toolkit: • Use new pedagogies and technology-mediated teaching Integrate tasks that build on international group work: • Have your students engage in concrete tasks or projects (problem-solving)
Administrator Perspective	Top motivators: • Expand student access for global learning • Innovate in the delivery of international programs • Respond to faculty members' interests • Reduce administrative barriers for international cooperation Recommendations: 1. Keep processes simple • Student should feel it's not too complicated to participate (e.g. admission/enrollment) • Clearly define admin processing for handling students on virtual exchanges 2. Communicate clearly • Avoid assumptions of "business as usual." • Listen to students, your team, and yourself. • Create commitment among your team and clarify expectations • Include all stakeholders (examination offices, registrar, students, faculty and international office)

Different continents, common ground?
Shared university experiences in Brazil and the UK

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Introduction/Background

The internationalization of Higher Education has taken many different shapes and formats in recent years. As well as traditional models of student/faculty mobility and exchanges, there has been a significant rise in online interactions, which offer an array of possibilities for academic communities across the globe to experience the benefits of engaging in multicultural, mind-opening and collaborative virtual settings.

The Evangelical University of Goiás (UniEVANGÉLICA), located in Anápolis, Brazil and Coventry University (CU), UK, first got together at NAFSA (now Association of International Educators) 2017 in Los Angeles and have since discussed ways of working together to advance internationalization in both institutions. Among the different ways collaboration could be carried out, COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) stood out as the most accessible, cost-effective and timely way to proceed. Indeed, Villar-Onrubia and Rajpal (2016, p.81) highlight the benefits of such virtual initiatives as 'one of the most flexible, versatile and inclusive approaches in the provision of experiential learning opportunities aimed at facilitating students' intercultural competence development.' This project would signal a direction both CU and UniEVANGÉLICA were keen to pursue, following the latest good practices in International Education.

In 2019 with the help of CU's COIL Team, a professor in Brazil and a senior lecturer in the UK were introduced to each other and discussed potential ways to collaborate in an online project. The plan included both synchronous and asynchronous interactions among other activities over a period of 8 weeks. The first synchronous meeting happened on February 19th, 2020.

Although the onset of the global pandemic signalled a dramatic increase in virtual communication and collaboration, it also resulted in the postponement of the first iteration of this COIL project involving the Brazilian cohort and international students based in the UK. The sudden lockdown and rush to get home to different global destinations and the wholesale transition to online learning with its new, unfamiliar mode of delivery, meant that the decision was taken to put the project on hold until the situation became clearer.

After taking park in IVEC 2020 and becoming more versed in a fully remote and online setting, the project leaders decided to re-launch this COIL project, adjusting to the new reality imposed on all of us.

What Defines COIL or VE

Collaborative Online International Learning, Virtual Mobility and Virtual Exchange are labels which indicate student experience and interaction in a virtual learning environment, nevertheless, it is important to specify and outline the framework used for this particular context before describing the collaboration in more detail.

For this project, the approach defined in Coventry University's vision and strategy was adopted. COIL is therefore considered to be any virtual activity that meets the following criteria:

C - Students must interact with an institution abroad, in a cross-border collaboration or interaction with people from different backgrounds and cultures.

O - Students must engage in some sort of online interaction, whether it is asynchronous or synchronous (or both). It is important to be aware that different schedules, academic calendars, timetable conflicts, and different time zones can be an obstacle and a constraint. Designing a project which takes these elements into account is essential.

I - Each COIL project must be driven by a set of internationalised learning outcomes aimed at developing global perspectives and/or fostering students' intercultural competences as well as digital skills.

L - The students are required to work on a reflective component that helps them think critically about such interaction. The medium and characteristics of the reflective element are to be decided by the project leaders. In this reflective final product/project or submission, the learning is evidenced and critically reflected upon. For other examples of Coventry University-initiated COIL Projects, see Orsini-Jones et al. (2015) and Preshous et al. (2018).

Participants

The 11 Brazilian participants were undergraduate students of many different programs and years at UniEVANGÉLICA. They were chosen based on their command of the English language and overall interest in interculturality.

The Coventry University cohort consisted of 11 final year undergraduate students on an International Business top-up course, a program in which students do two years of study in their own country and the final year overseas at a partner institution, in this case, the UK. These participants were from China, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria and Pakistan.

Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The aim of this project was to align with the criteria outlined above and to present topics that were manageable and accessible for the participants and would encourage interaction.

The Learning outcomes were as follows:
- Find out about university life in another international context to raise intercultural awareness.
- Enhance communication skills in English and develop intercultural competence.
- Interact virtually and collaborate on group tasks to develop digital skills and promote teamwork.
- Offer opportunities for critical reflection.
- Introduce the topic of 'decolonising the curriculum'

These outcomes complement the definition put forward by Helm (2019, p.139-140) that VE 'fosters the development of digital literacies, in particular the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively online for learning and professional purposes.' For a detailed examination of the extent to which VE can enhance critical digital literacy, see Hauck (2019).

Infrastructure, Technology and Tools

For this project, Coventry University provided the online space for the learning content – the Open Moodle platform. This licensed digital space is open to external access. Open Moodle (OM) allows all participants to self-enrol on the project page. Students can access all spaces that are not hidden on the page. Project leaders can customise the page for the purpose of their project and to increase the engagement of students. In this case, students were provided with activity boxes for each topic, a discussion forum and freedom to post and comment. Project leaders could monitor and edit the page at any time and communicate with students via email as necessary.

Screenshot of Open Moodle interface for students on this COIL project
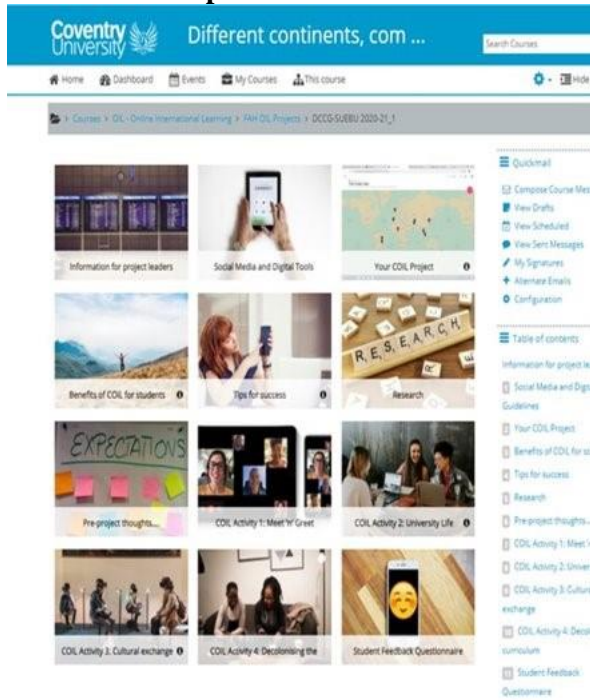
For all synchronous meetings, Zoom was used. This allows video and audio participation with multiple users simultaneously, and it also provides a written chat option and break-out rooms for group activities.

For student-student communication, participants could choose whatever app they felt suitable to interact with. They were encouraged to evidence their exchanges and post on OM. Most groups chose WhatsApp, as it is free, accessible, and user-friendly software for synchronous and asynchronous communication.

To post images and share other visual content (see Topic 3 below), the app Padlet was chosen, as it is available and accessible through the institutional licence.

Screenshot of COIL Project Activity 3: Cultural Exchange
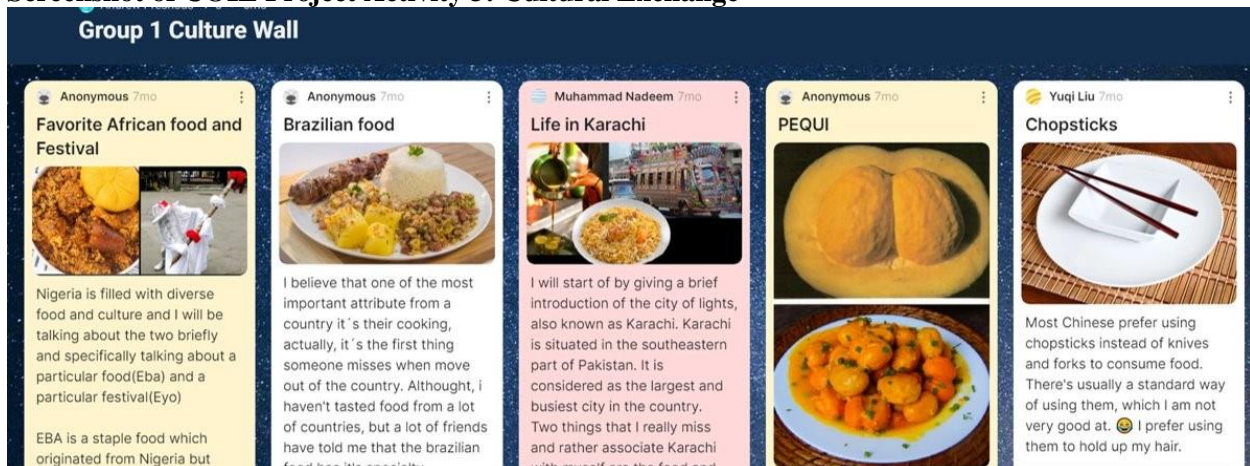
Interaction Outcomes

At each stage of the project, digital tasks and activities were set up that facilitated interaction between participants, a collaborative approach that also promotes 'productive language output' as advocated by González-Lloret (2020, p. 260).

Topic 1: Meet 'n' greet

Participants evidenced how they had introduced themselves and started building relationships in a variety of ways including: extracts of WhatsApp discussions, postings on the Open Moodle forum or by uploading word documents or visually striking PDF documents with details about different team members.

Topic 2: Sharing experiences of university life

A 'Find someone who....' activity was used as a prompt to stimulate interaction and though few interesting examples of evidence were submitted on Open Moodle, there were still some very creative contributions posted by one of the groups.

Topic 3: Cultural exchange

Prompts to share information about items, events, musical genres, or places that participants felt represented their culture and that they had a personal connection to were given. Inevitably, the initial interactions centred on food. For this topic, Padlet spaces were set up and participants posted details and images representing different cultural elements (mainly food) from their country. Straightforward, accessible tasks that interest the learners can increase engagement. Schenker (2013) also describes how VE can promote students' interest in learning about other cultures.

Topic 4: Decolonising the curriculum

This topic was introduced to raise awareness on how colonisation, even today, filters into participants' everyday lives and can still impact them significantly. Reflecting on the origins of their names, the history of their favourite food, the names of squares, streets and/or monuments in their cities/towns enabled the participants to begin to engage with this theme. Again, clear prompts were provided which meant that the students could begin to explore different areas and think critically about the effects of colonisation in a broader sense.

Challenges, Insights & Feedback

It is important to highlight some of the challenges faced and outline positive aspects emerging from the project, as a way of both acknowledging and sharing insights into what worked well and considering how to address elements that were less successful.

This project was not linked to a formal assessment of the students at either institution; thus, participation was voluntary, rather than mandatory. Despite the efforts to select participants who were willing to fully immerse themselves in the project, we experienced various levels of engagement across the groups. While some students were very active in their participation, others failed to meet our expectations in terms of interactions with their counterparts. Our insight is that, for the next iteration, there needs to be ways of ensuring more involvement and participation in the activities. However, for those participants that did engage, it was clearly a positive experience, for example, one commented that they had gained

> more insight about culture in places I didn't know much about before […] I learned to be more respectful and listen to others, people that were raised differently and also lived in different reality from me.

Another noteworthy element is the valuable support of CU's COIL team, both backstage and on screen to make sure the project ran smoothly. Not only were the lead tutors and participants offered

support – Open Moodle registration, technical support, information about certificates of completion – but were also given invaluable insights into the conception and progress of the project.

As online education has become more prevalent since the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, one outcome is that we have become more competent as practitioners of virtual delivery and are now more familiar with the virtual resources available. Moorhouse, Li and Walsh (2021) identify and discuss the specific online competences now required by teachers to promote interaction effectively in the virtual classroom, which is relevant for the delivery of any synchronous sessions on COIL projects. However, technology is still very much a challenge to be highlighted. Not all participants shared the same level of digital literacy and there can be issues with unreliable or unstable internet connections.

Intercultural by design, this project involved eight different nationalities and the aim was to be sensitive to cultural events or festivals that took place during the project. Academic calendars are significantly different in Brazil and the UK, so that left a narrow window for the project to be carried out. On top of that, we needed to be aware of local holidays such as the Brazilian Carnival, Chinese New Year and Ramadan/Eid, all of which would impact on the collaborations. The project factored in these events and the original timescale was extended.

Some previous COIL projects have led to follow-up exchanges where participants can travel to meet each other. In pandemic times, this blended option was clearly not viable. We will bear this in mind that for future runs of this project and, depending on the international situation and available budget, we may consider a face-to-face element.

On the project we took a light touch approach to the Decolonising the curriculum theme, but this topic did provoke some interesting responses and a stimulating live synchronous session via Zoom. In feedback, one participant reflected that this topic

> was something that I have never thought about before. But it also inspired me to think a little bit more about the cultural issues of my country, how it got here and even why it happened.

Next steps

All in all, we consider this to have been a successful collaboration. Despite minor obstacles, our learning outcomes were met based on the evidence of the interactions, participant feedback, and our perceptions of the engagement between cohorts. Participants were able to collaborate which increased their intercultural awareness and developed intercultural competences, they used English as a Lingua Franca to communicate, and began to reflect on the impact of colonialism.

With careful planning, engaging virtual activities and a motivated cohort, COIL can offer rewarding, interesting experiences for students and staff alike. Having learnt valuable lessons on what worked well and what needs to be tweaked, we plan to run this project again with a new cohort at the earliest opportunity.

Questions and comments

Attendees at the IVEC live session asked several interesting questions in the Q&A section and there was some constructive discussion, for example, on how 'Decolonising the Curriculum' could be covered in more depth in a future iteration of the project. As this project had only offered an introduction to this area, we believe that a more thorough exploration would be possible if we were to take the approach of embedding this theme across all topics.

Not only has our experience of setting up, running and evaluating this project made us more prepared for future runs, but after hearing about other virtual exchanges in different settings all over the world at IVEC, we are now inspired to move forward with this and new COIL projects too.

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Becoming a COIL Virtual Exchange Coordinator

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Donald MacGannon, a broadcasting executive during the early developmental years of the television industry, once said, "leadership is an action, not a position." Similarly, a leadership vacuum occurs when no one is able to act. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed a significant leadership gap in the field of internationalization when it suddenly and completely shut down in-person activities. The search for online internationalization options prompted a groundswell of new interest in Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), a form virtual exchange, but few campuses had robust experience with this methodology, much less full- and/or part-time personnel tasked with coordinating COIL. Institutions looking to rapidly initiate or advance a COIL program were hampered in their search for qualified coordinating personnel due to a lack of knowledge concerning the competencies needed to fulfill the diverse responsibilities associated with this emergent role. Lack of knowledge about the position of COIL Coordinator continues to constrain advancements in institutional leadership and action and the internationalization of higher education, overall.

This workshop, discussed here, offered institutional leaders and current and aspiring COIL coordinators a comprehensive vision of the competencies needed to fulfill the many responsibilities of COIL coordination. The workshop expanded on the IVEC 2020 presentation, "The COIL/Virtual Exchange Coordinator: Toward the Establishment of Professional Standards of Practice," wherein Doscher set forth a draft framework of competencies. Using an updated version of the framework (Doscher, 2021), Doscher and veteran COIL Coordinators Haug, León, and Mendez guided participants through a series of reflective leadership development activities. Participants were tasked with identifying the coordination competencies that they already possessed, areas for knowledge and skill growth, and sources of professional development and support.

Evaluating COIL's Impact Through Ripple Effect Mapping

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The impact of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) upon comprehensive internationalization is often measured and communicated in terms of institutional outputs such as the number of students and faculty who COIL, the number and disciplinary breadth of courses that include a COIL, and the number and geographic breadth of COIL partnerships. Some institutions invest time and resources in capturing COIL's impact on student learning outcomes such as intercultural and global citizenship competencies. While these measures are meaningful, they fail to tell the whole story of COIL's value because they do not capture COIL's power to connect participants to a host of other internationalized teaching, research, service, career, and professional development opportunities both within and outside the institution. This session explored an alternative, multidimensional method for evaluating COIL's value to the institution and its internal and external stakeholders: Ripple Effect Mapping (REM). REM is a participatory evaluation method that prompts stakeholders to "retrospectively and visually map the chain of effects resulting from a program or complex collaboration" (Chazdon et al. 2017: xi). REM collects the untold stories and behind-the-scenes effects that "ripple out" from a specific program or activity. Participants in this session learned about how Fraser's visualization of her COIL's ripple effects, shared with Florida International University's COIL Director Doscher, prompted the university to adopt REM as part of its strategic approach to leading both COIL and comprehensive internationalization, overall.

Ripple Effects Map: Nicki Fraser's COIL Experience
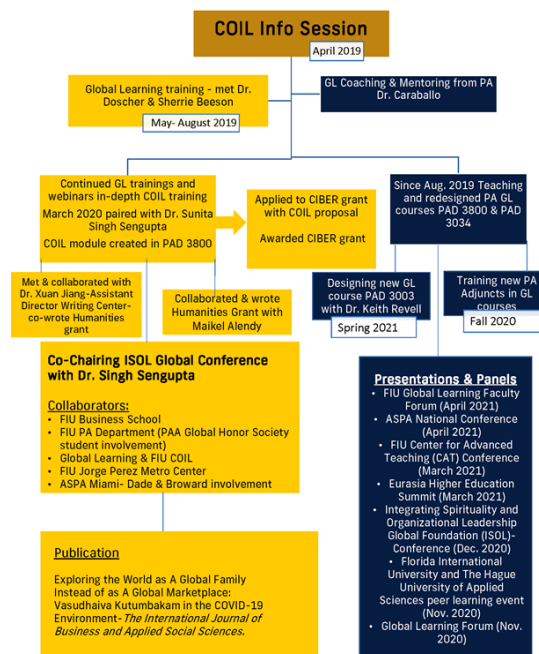
After Fraser shared her personal story, Doscher discussed how she uses REM to discover and catalyze the radiant, synergistic power of COIL. Doscher discussed the role of the COIL Coordinator in mobilizing the conditions and supports that allow COIL faculty partners to build strength upon strength. REM captures COIL's unique ability to enable partner faculty and students to connect to and create a wide variety of cascading opportunities, from professional networking, mobility, and research to grants, publications, internships, dual degree programs, and more.

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Addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Engineering Education: Virtual exchange as a practice to generate students' insights into global challenges

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Introduction

A growing interest has developed in recent years regarding the range of skills that will be needed by future professionals to meet the global and complex challenges of tomorrow's world. While technical knowledge is essential to a successful career in engineering, "soft skills" are playing an increasingly important role in the engineering field as emphasized by the current demands of the labor market and the society: they include problem solving and critical thinking, communication skills, teamwork, social responsibility, emotional intelligence, and creativity (de Campos et al. 2020).

In addition, within the architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industry, the need for new approaches and tools has become crucial to ensuring sustainability at different levels, especially with regard to the global objectives of protection of the planet, sustainable use of resources and people's health and well-being. As is well known, the built environment is one of the main contributors to energy consumption, CO_2 emissions and depletion of non-renewable resources. However, it is also the place where people spend most of their time and upon which their physical and mental well-being and stability depend.

The engineering profession has a critical role to play in the making human development sustainable which will require skills, tools, and education to address the global problems that our planet is facing or will be facing within the next 20 years (Mintz et al. 2014). As such, it is becoming more and more apparent that universities have a critical role in providing knowledge, testing, solutions and innovations to sustain and support the success of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been identified by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (Gómez-Martín et al. 2021).

The Global Classroom: a virtual exchange experience addressing SDGs

Based on these premises and supported by common research interests, Drexel University and the Politecnico di Milano have been collaborating on a virtual exchange project since 2017 in the form of two Global Classrooms included in the educational offerings of the two programs in Architectural Engineering at the two universities.

The two courses (Responsive Urban Environments + Bio-inspired Design) address global sustainability challenges at two different scales: the first in relation to the urban built environment (SDGs 11 and 13) and the second in relation to conditions that foster people's Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3). The Global Classroom is a type of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), which expands the intercultural and transnational learning opportunities of university students. Through teaching modules developed and delivered in

collaboration between the two universities, virtual exchange supports the training of future professionals and encourages comparisons between teaching methodologies from different contexts. Experiences in global learning that place students and teachers into contact with students and teachers in other countries demonstrate that engineering problems can be solved in more than one way and also carry the learning one step further: learning through the collaboration with others to effectively engage in different understandings and ways of thinking, which also makes more visible the non-technical human dimensions of engineering work that stand alongside the technical dimensions as essential core features (Downey et al. 2006).

In the period of distance learning brought about by the COVID-19 emergency, the Global Classroom demonstrated its full potential to connect students who are geographically separated, but who share common challenges. The contextual challenge of overcoming the pandemic and the broader challenges addressed by the two classes that were working together to solve some of the global challenges the world is faced with today.

This contextual challenge of overcoming the pandemic together with the broader environmental challenges that were being addressed by the two classes collaborating was representative in real time of the global challenges that the world is faced with today.

A learning experience to train globally responsible engineers

The Responsive Urban Environment (RUE) Classroom looks at the city through the lens of ecosystem management and investigates possible strategies to adopt to provide a complex adaptive system with the necessary flexibility and the capacity to respond to environmental change and uncertainty (Ellis and Iannaccone 2021). The Bio-inspired Design Global Classroom explains why designers and engineers need to consider relationships between the built environment and nature by providing the scientific and medical reasons behind the effects of the natural environment on health and wellbeing.

The virtual exchange format brings students from the United States and Italy together to discuss why engineers need to consider relationships between the built environment and nature in solving global challenges. The involvement of experts from various fields introduces the students to knowledge from scientific disciplines that are often considered outside the strictly engineering fields. Since the students come from different backgrounds and major in multiple disciplines that are offered university wide, one of the class's strengths is the opportunity for students to immediately apply this new knowledge through design exercises that engage the students in multidisciplinary, and not just international, teams.

Students approach teamwork after an initial phase of individual research to begin to frame the different topics offered by the class with respect to their own points of view. The objective is to engage the students immediately in the project activity within their comfort zones, making them more confident in the knowledge they will bring as a contribution to the teamwork. Indeed, in the first part of the class, students are required to develop an individual research paper that explores one of the topics addressed in the lecture or seminar. Everyone can develop their individual research by applying their own knowledge and analyzing the object of the research through the lens of their own field of study.

In the second part of each class, students are organized in multidisciplinary teams of four to carry out a design exercise, under the close direction of the teachers, that relates the theoretical knowledge to the design process and gives the student experience with solving practical design problems.

Fig. 1 – The Global Classroom before pandemic: teacher and students were connected by videoconference from their physical classroom with the physical classroom at the other university.

For the Responsive Urban Environment Classroom student teams are asked to develop a conceptual design for the creation of a Resilience Hub to be placed in one of two proposed project areas: one site in Philadelphia, the other in Milan.
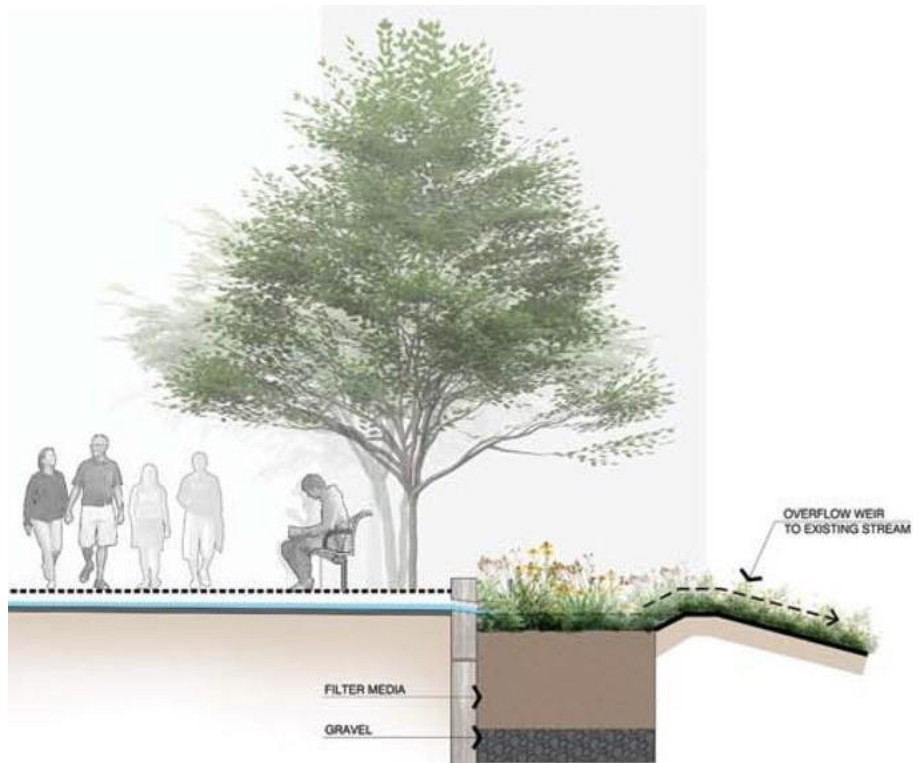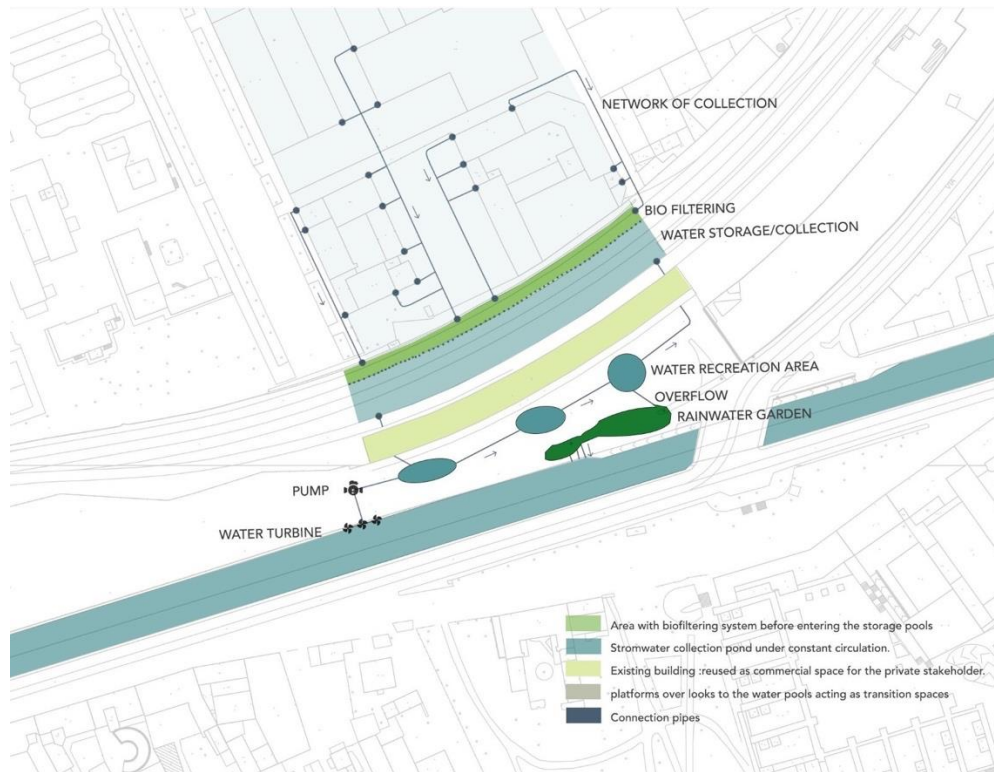
Fig. 2 – Parco della Pioggia: a stormwater park for the City of Milan. Project proposal developed by the multidisciplinary team of students for the Responsive Urban Environments classroom: Federico Antonelli (Politecnico di Milano), Nathan Doty (Drexel University), Gayathriach Uthankutty (Politecnico di Milano), Miguel Verratti (Drexel University).

For the Bio-inspired Design Global Classroom student teams are asked to develop a conceptual design for an innovative building component or strategy inspired by a biological system or strategy.
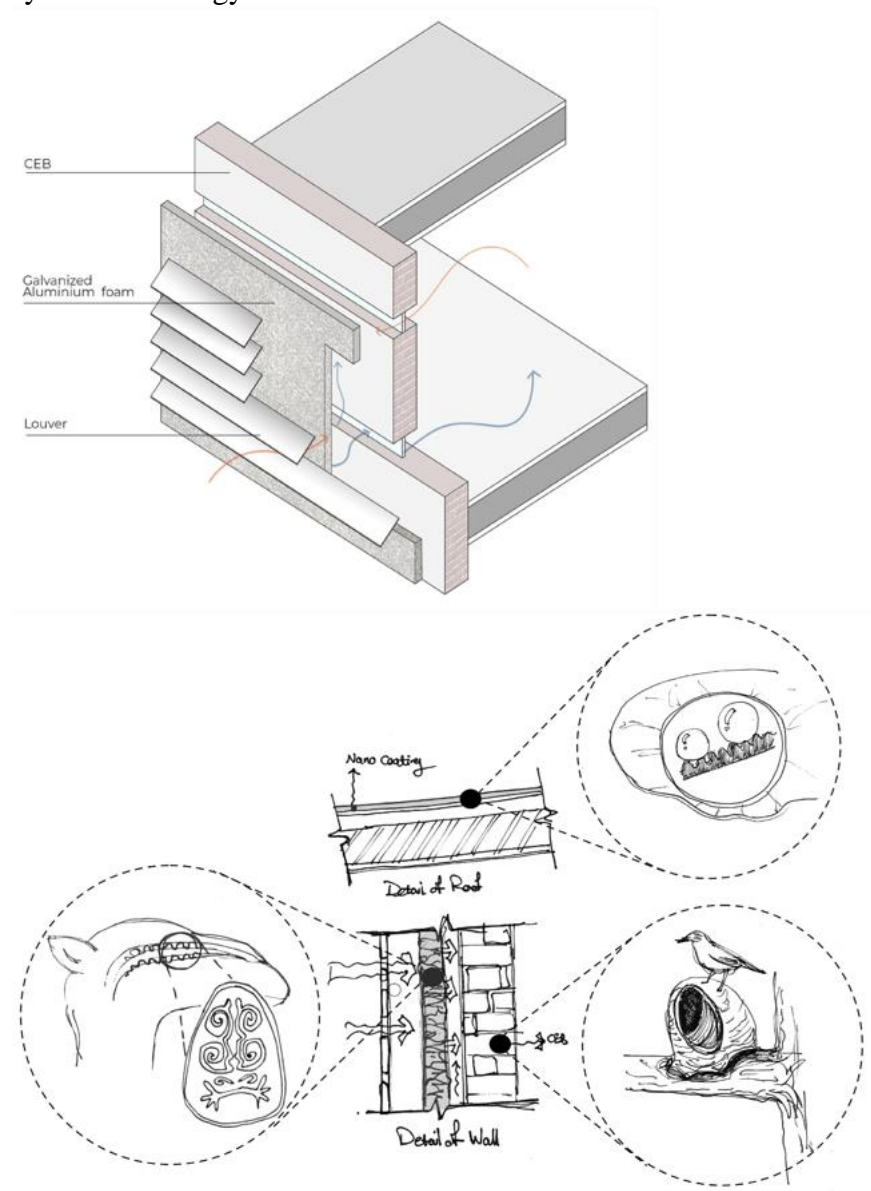
Fig. 3 – Breathing Envelope: a passively cooled building envelope system. Project proposal developed by the multidisciplinary team of students for the Bio-inspired Design classroom: Mia Emily Lowe (Drexel University), Mona Khakpour Azizi (Politecnico di Milano), Nicola Meirose Peccin (Politecnico di Milano).

Developing effective written and oral communication is essential for college students in every field. Emotional and communicative characteristics of the student determine success in life no less than academic achievement. In our classes we require students to conduct in-class presentations of research and design projects similar to what they might encounter in the field as professionals after graduation.

One of the main problems generally encountered in a course like this is students' lack of preparation and the ineffective use of PowerPoint as a presentation tool: for example, too much text on a single slide, inadequate use of graphics and images, and timing. To address this problem and improve the students' communications skills we require the students to use the PechaKucha style for presentations. The PechaKucha style was introduced in Tokyo in 2003 as a format for presentation for informal gatherings in which creative people meet in public to share ideas, thoughts, and interests. In the PechaKucha format the presenter must show the audience 20 slides with a presentation time of 20 seconds per slide. The goal is to make presentations concise and at a rapid pace to facilitate understanding by the audience.

Conclusions

The practice of international virtual exchange in college coursework encourages students to broaden their horizons and generate new insights to face and solve the challenges of tomorrow through the promotion of multidisciplinary transnational teamwork that addresses a common global need by considering different perspectives or multidisciplinary points of view. By taking the students' technical skills to a different level, this experience also provides additional 'soft' skills that are more and more in demand by the labor market for future professionals. The first collaborative online class between Drexel and Polimi was launched the Spring Term of 2017 and has been confirmed every year since then. The COIL format that was already in place at Drexel University was officially introduced at the Politecnico di Milano as a teaching method in university curricula. Established in the pre-pandemic period, today the Global Classroom has become a role model for the implementation of new collaborative courses.

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An Unspoken Truth: Faculty (In)Equity in International Virtual Exchange

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Virtual exchange is being increasingly viewed as a tool to promote not just intercultural learning but also diversity, equity, and inclusion among students in higher education in the United States. Since participation in traditional study abroad seemed to be stagnant at around a discouraging 5% in US colleges even before the pandemic, virtual exchange offers an exciting alternative to expose many more students to global experiences, albeit at a distance.

In setting up these virtual exchanges, however, an interesting dynamic emerged in certain partnerships created by faculty from Venezuela, Yemen, and the USA. They all focused rightly on the benefits they could bring to their students. However, what almost got lost behind the professionalism of the Global South instructors, was the fact that while striving to bring an equitable opportunity to their students, they themselves in many cases struggled with severe inequities in their own society, and even in the supposedly-neutral "third space" offered by virtual exchange, these inequities persisted but were not acknowledged.

The fact that a virtual exchange partnership between the Global North and Global South must navigate several differences--in time zones, language, and culture--is easily accepted. However, how might those unspoken-of differences and inequities caused by economic or political stress be navigated? How might the human capital and the grace with which these instructors strive for the betterment of their students while struggling in their own lives be recognized? How might the Global North instructors prepare to support their colleagues from the Global South for whom the very act of teaching is activism?

Virtual exchange partnerships must add meaning and support for *both* students and faculty. However, the inconvenient truth is that these exchanges are not always equitable for participating faculty. Traditional power structures and invisible privileges easily get in the way, particularly when faculty from the Global North are not fully cognizant of the sociopolitical realities being experienced by their partners in the Global South. The solutions should go beyond practicing cultural humility. Virtual exchanges should be grounded in the ethical responsibility of honoring the human capital that *both* partners bring to the partnership.

This paper offers perspectives from the United States, Venezuela, and Yemen, to encourage future community-wide honest conversation among the virtual exchange practitioners, about the unspoken truth of faculty inequity. It provides examples of solutions that have been implemented and opens the door for further consideration.

Incubating Mindset and Skill Set through PBL:
Case Studies of Two Virtual Exchange Programs

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Abstract

Due to COVID-19, increasing numbers of employees are using various IT platforms to conduct business virtually, especially for idea generation and project collaboration. To thrive in the post-COVID-19 world, analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, and complex problem-solving are the top three essential skills, according to the Future of Jobs Report (World Economic Forum 2020). As educators, we need to nurture future leaders who can understand the impact of digitalization on business.

We fill this gap by practicing and promoting the use of Virtual Exchange/Collaborative Online International Learning (VE/COIL)-based approaches to project-based learning (PBL). Here we report on two short-term intensive programs aimed at cultivating the right mindsets and fostering intercultural competency and entrepreneurship in students at Kansai University in Japan. These programs were designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and tools to enhance their employability. For example, as the phenomenon of global virtual collaboration has become a norm in the workplace, one program (Entrepreneurship Mindset Program) was designed with a new approach in which students experienced and exercised fully online a cycle of entrepreneurial project execution, starting from problem identification to pitching the project outcome. Instead of unidirectional lectures, we emphasized direct hands-on practice in various IT platforms (Discord, Padlet, and Miro) to facilitate teamwork in different project phases. The other program (Global Career Mind Program) was designed such that it would facilitate cultural and personal self-awareness, and afford for insights into working in international/multicultural settings.

We observed the impact of these two programs on raising students' awareness of cultural diversity and willingness to explore new ideas. Students were at the center of learning activities and teachers acted as facilitators to help students apply just-learned skills and problem-solving tools to simulate actual business scenarios in a structured environment. Although these programs presented a steep learning curve, we observed that students' digital competency demonstrated improvement. These types of programs represent examples of recent developments in the implementation of explicitly VE programs.

Introduction

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) can be described as an innovative approach in higher education that can ensure global engagement for students and faculty through

connecting them to different countries and enabling them to carry out collaborative projects. As a multifaceted educational approach that is cost-effective and high impact, COIL has its roots in collaborative learning. In its broadest form, collaborative learning can be defined as a pedagogical strategy that aims to promote joint intellectual exchange among students. It is currently adopted in higher education settings that value active student learning and engagement over the unidirectional transmission of knowledge from teachers to students. That this approach assigns active roles to students while accentuating the effects of collaboration on learning makes it suitable for improving employability in students in higher education. Students who take part in collaborative learning will have the privilege of acquiring the skills to work with others, think and reflect critically, express their opinions and communicate their ideas, and manage and evaluate themselves and others. All of these skills, possibly among others, can be ideally transferred to the workplace; meaning that once graduated, students are equipped with the knowledge and skills that can boost their readiness to work and employability prospects.

These essential skills are reportedly in short supply in today's business leaders, who demonstrate a gap in developing the critical knowledge and skills (digital literacy, leading virtual teams, and curiosity) to succeed in the digital era according to the Global Leadership Forecast (Development Dimensions International 2018). Spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic, the movement to adopt remote working practices and the utilization of various IT platforms for virtual business and project collaboration has highlighted this deficiency. In Japan, over 90 percent of companies have accelerated the digitalization of work processes and over 80 percent plan to provide more opportunities to work remotely. However, only half perceive their employees to possess sufficient digital skills (World Economic Forum 2020). To thrive in the post-COVID-19 world, the Future of Jobs Report (World Economic Forum 2020) states that analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, and complex problem-solving are the top three essential skills. This serves to inform our institutional desire to be able to provide opportunities for students to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities that might underpin their development as future leaders who can understand and clearly articulate the impacts of digitalization on business management.

We fill this gap by first designing and practicing a synthesis of VE/COIL-based pedagogical approaches to project-based learning. Our objective is twofold. First, we aim to answer what mindset is required for students to navigate complex environments and how to cultivate that mindset. For example, the Global Leadership Forecast 2018 (Development Dimensions International 2018) report emphasizes that digitally savvy leaders need to have both cultural and intellectual curiosity. One of three future critical skills (World Economic Forum 2020), active learning is defined as the attitude of discovery and exploration and desire to learn new digital competencies. Second, we work to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and tools to enhance their employability in the post-pandemic world in which global virtual collaboration has become the norm. To echo those dimensions, we developed two short-term intensive VE/COIL programs, partnering with top-notch universities, consultant firms, and business representatives, centered around an entrepreneurial mindset that addresses the ability to sense, act, and mobilize under uncertain conditions (Haynie et al. 2010), and a global mindset that addresses the ability to act effectively within environments characterized by high cultural and business complexity (Andresen & Bergdolt 2017).

Our preliminary results show the impact of this new approach to enhance students' intercultural competence and willingness to explore new ideas. Although with a steep learning

curve, the results also show the potential to enhance students' digital competency (e.g., use of digital tools for conducting virtual teamwork) in short but intensive sessions.

The first program, in collaboration with WASABI Co. (Singapore), was executed in three phases: preparation (assigning self-paced reading and a sprint VE/COIL project with Clemson University), virtual projects (starting an entrepreneurial business and running through various IT platforms), and reflection (Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory assessment and English language proficiency assessment). Students were tasked with executing a complete project cycle entirely online, from collaborative problem identification and idea generation, through prototyping, and finally pitching their business outcomes. Instead of unidirectional lectures, we emphasized direct hands-on practice in various IT platforms (Discord, Padlet, and Miro) to facilitate teamwork in different project phases, identifying customer needs and hosting virtual inter-team discussion (through text messaging, photo sharing, and video conferencing) to resolve real-life issues related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The second program, in collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), focused on cultivating students' "global career mindset" and was designed to equip them with the practical skills to succeed in a global business environment. The program featured a series of virtual lectures and workshops, including a sprint VE/COIL with Otterbein University students, presentation skills practice, how to build social capital through communicating confidence, the introduction of the impact of technology to business, interpersonal and intercultural communication skills, and guest lecturers from different backgrounds (e.g., Softbank Vision Fund, Google, Salesforce, venture capitals) working in global business.

In both programs, we used a blended learning approach to integrate online and self-paced learning materials, where students are the center of learning and teachers act as facilitators to help students apply just-learned concepts, skills, and tools in problem-solving scenarios. In what follows, we introduce in detail these program case studies as emerging pedagogies in international VE/COIL education specifically designed to address the widening gap in 21st century skills and digital competency. We conclude that these two programs create value for students to succeed in a future business setting.

Case I: Entrepreneurship Mindset Program

This intensive five-week Entrepreneurship Mindset (EMS) program was designed to nurture future business leaders and entrepreneurs who can understand the impact of digitalization on business and adapt to technological trends. It focused on entrepreneurial qualities such as problem identification, cause analysis, solution planning, and conceptualization skills, and offered students the opportunity to gain new perspectives and expand their future possibilities by providing them hands-on entrepreneurial experiences and the chance to work with overseas peers in a VE/COIL project.

The EMS program was deliberately designed to integrate the aforementioned entrepreneurial qualities in three aspects. First, in order for the students to "get the big picture," they were required to learn why the subject of entrepreneurship matters and its role in a specific domain. With that clarity, they were then asked to apply critical thinking and conduct team projects. Second, we applied VE/COIL in the program collaborating with the three institutions, Clemson University (South Carolina, U.S.); James Madison University (Virginia, U.S.); and Nanyang Polytechnic (Singapore), to provide students with more virtual interactive opportunities. Third, students were given concrete examples of product creation theory and were asked to create a mobile app that presents solutions to SDG-related issues based on the

knowledge gained from the lectures and discussions. Students were asked to form their own groups based around the selection of an SDG they felt most passionate about. This problem-driven method contributed to maintaining their motivation throughout the program and provided valuable opportunities for students to identify and solve practical problems within a structured environment.

Through VE/COIL, students worked on team projects with their peers from overseas, which not only allowed them to learn about business from an international perspective, but also led to intercultural communication and understanding of other cultures — a necessary soft skill in global human resource management development, or "global jinzai" as it is referred to in Japanese. Working with the overseas faculty members, we created an environment where students could freely interact and voice their opinions, practice active critical thinking, and actively engage in analysis and open discussion through a diverse range of decision contexts without fear of making mistakes.

Student feedback reflected the positive impact of this program. According to the post-program survey, all students responded as being "moderately satisfied" or "satisfied" with the program content and overall. Additionally, around 90 percent of students expressed their desire to participate in a similar program again in the future. Given this feedback, we encourage more educators to utilize our integrative and intensive model of a short-term VE/COIL program and further combine it with field study to create a greater impact on students' learning process.

Case II: Global Career Mind Program

The Global Career Mind (GCM) program ran for approximately two weeks in February 2021, a period during which students had been taking courses online already for some time, and student mobility was halted. Many students enrolled in the program cited their inability to study abroad as a motivating factor, while others, who had been abroad at the start of the pandemic and were forced to return to Japan, wished to continue to develop the practical English skills that they hoped to improve in their traditional mobility programs. Others simply hoped the program would give them some idea of what it would be like to work in an international or intercultural work environment.

In collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley, we created a customized program that would facilitate students' personal and cultural self-awareness, and provide them with valuable insight into working in an international/multicultural setting. The program focused not only on practical language skills, but many of the hard and soft skills necessary to succeed in a business environment. The goal of this VE/COIL program was to engage students in a lively discussion to facilitate personal and cultural self-awareness, help them become better acquainted with their international peers, and to give them the tools to look beyond stereotypes building upon the knowledge and skills gained in the intensive GCM program and putting them into practice.

The main program consisted of a series of lectures and workshops facilitated by a UCB lead instructor and guest speakers, which were aimed at fostering students' public speaking, presentation, and research skills, honing in on the importance of interpersonal and intercultural communication, and expanding their knowledge of program themes to cultivate their "global career mind." The culmination of this program was a final presentation in which students were asked to select and analyze a business model from the Softbank Vision Fund Portfolio. This was bookended by a VE/COIL with Otterbein University (Ohio, U.S.) in which our students connected with peers enrolled in an elementary Japanese language course. While the exchanges

took place mainly in English, Otterbein students also had the opportunity to use Japanese. Although some students struggled with second language proficiency, overall feedback showed positive results. A post-program survey indicated that the students unanimously would recommend the program to their peers, and felt motivated to participate in similar programs in the future.

Given the short-term, intensive nature of the program, it was not our expectation that significant transformation in students' practical language skills nor intercultural mindsets would change drastically over the course of a few weeks. However, it is our hope that these programs foster an impactful curiosity to develop the knowledge and skills to cultivate a global mindset to serve them in their future careers.

Assessment and Areas for Improvement in Future Programs

While the logistical challenges of these short-term intensive PBL programs should be mentioned — time zone differences, abbreviated program timelines, and the limitations of a completely remote environment — gaps in the students' digital literacy skills posed perhaps the greatest initial obstacle to achieving the desired learning outcomes of both programs. Despite the marked increase in the usage of such technology in remote online courses throughout the 2020 academic year, many students who previously may have been acclimated only to using technology accessible via mobile devices — as opposed to personal computers — struggled at the outset, requiring thorough guidance from the lead instructors to navigate not only the required hardware, but potentially unfamiliar software, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Discord, Padlet, Miro, and partner university LMS systems, during program orientation.

Students and guest speakers alike would also have benefitted from increased awareness of students' practical language skill levels prior to the start of the programs. This was noted both in post-program meetings between lead instructors and program coordinators, as well as student experience surveys. While those parties responsible for organizing the program were thoroughly briefed on students' language proficiency levels with reference to their scores on standardized language tests including TOEIC, TOEFL (ITP), and IELTS, as well as the results of their informal online interviews prior to acceptance into the program, guest instructors seemed not to have been sufficiently apprised, often resulting in their speech being too fast-paced for maximum student comprehension and retention, particularly in the GCM program.

In addition to addressing the aforementioned challenges, several additional aspects for future program consideration include highlighting the importance and participation of peer mentors, who, as indicated in GCM program feedback, were invaluable resources to students enrolled in the program. Peer mentors, as well as guest speakers should additionally be invited to attend final presentations to serve as panelists to comment on the students' hard work and witness the growth achieved during a short period of time. Finally, increased interaction with local students in the target country should be considered in future programs, as it adds greatly to students' experiences, increasing their confidence in using their practical language skills outside of the traditional classroom setting by allowing a space for casual interaction to take place comfortably without the pressure of evaluation from instructors. Student feedback indicated that this was a particular highlight of their participation in both programs.

To conclude, it is also important to choose appropriate assessment tools and strategies to aid both program design and evaluation. Assessments utilized in our programs included both the BEVI (Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory) and English proficiency tests that were conducted before and after the program (e.g., Versant and OPIc). Importantly, assessments should be used

that provide not just program administrators data but those that can provide detailed results directly to students.

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Educational Innovation in Times of Crisis: Technological and Cultural Reflection of the UCAB and SUNY-Albany Students on COIL experience

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Abstract

In the fall semester 2019, a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) project was held between a Documentary Film course at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) in Caracas, Venezuela, and a Popular Culture course of the State University of New York at Albany (SUNY-Albany) in Albany, New York. The first class was conducted by Professor José Luis Jiménez and the second one by Professor Ilka Kressner.

In that collaboration several educational activities were carried out, interconnecting documentary techniques with popular culture by using innovative technology and massive communication media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Internet, among others, and concluding it with a compiled documentary about the student's overall experience. Over a year after the COIL project ended, three students from SUNY-Albany and three from UCAB came together to reflect on their learning experiences and possible cultural perspective changes between both ethnicity groups as a result of the collaborative initiative. The objective of this work is to reflect on the COIL's experience of UCAB and SUNY-Albany students to evaluate the role that technology and culture play in learning as well as determining how that interaction impacted the relationship of pupils from different countries and cultures. Additionally, it will examine whether the course objectives were met, the simplicity or difficulty level of the activity, and possible communication barriers among students through the formulation of key questions. Furthermore, this collaboration will analyze how the cultural perspectives of SUNY-Albany students changed in relation to UCAB's and vice versa.

Presentation Content

Review of the contents of the COIL UCAB-SUNY 2019 course

The first topic we are going to talk about is the course content review of the COIL UCAB-SUNY 2019. The objectives addressed during the class were to develop a critical and argumentative analysis about audiovisual, cultural, and popular expressions in different Hispano-American contexts, and to create an audiovisual piece that emphasize the cultural contrast according to the theory of studied concepts of popular culture.

During the class several questions came up:

- What is the role of mass media in Latin America?
- What is the role of the spoken word in contrast with the written one?
- In which way does popular culture belong to the people?

During the course we faced several difficulties at the organization level. Availability was a challenge because it was a class held in collaboration before the pandemic and by then we were not familiar with Zoom and the way today's projects are executed. For Venezuelan students it seemed inconceivable to do such a big project remotely; it was perceived as something difficult and that was one of the biggest difficulties at the beginning. The second difficulty was the language because many students from Venezuela lacked the adequate level of English to read the articles required for class. There were also linguistic variations among Hispano-American

students from SUNY and UCAB who have some variations about concepts of the same word. An example was the word "popular" that generated a small debate because some related it to a concept that went back to tradition of past generations and for others was an urban concept or referred to a lower social class. The long-term learning outcome was one of the objectives we achieved, which occurred later and was done long before this collaboration we are holding now.

Technology management

Information and Communication Technologies, also known as ICT, are the set of technologies developed to manage information and send it from one place to another, including the technologies to store information and retrieve it later, send and receive information from one site to another. This is a term that, although not new, has evolved. This program was given, and how communications were given in that way, and only one video call was made because the rest of the information was mostly written. The next section would be the use of video calling platforms.

Before talking about the use of the Zoom platform and the graph of the Statista portal, I would like to talk a little bit about the level of commitment that was what we realized at the end of the program that we did. When that first call was made, and after it had been made, the commitment and empathy between the students and the connection between the SUNY and UCAB students were much greater. The visual exchange and the fact of speaking and seeing the person made communication more intense. After that video call, chats and communication through technology continued, but it was not as fluid or intense as it was with the video call. This showed that the level of commitment is also related to the investment one has in the course and people, which is consistent with this graph that we share here, which is through interactive online platforms. When the pandemic happened, we can see how Zoom's use has increased, directly related to the use of platforms worldwide, which grew exponentially. Zoom presentations of video calls and meetings would be the main delivery of information from now on, and it is something that we would see in the next COIL exchange and how important it is to be done by online interactive platforms.

Mass-Media and Super-Media.

The terms Media and Super-Media were vital to our international exchange. Our COIL experience has created a fruitful relationship. The use of digital platforms has helped us throughout our group. The Media is a means of communication, both printed, digital and electronic. The term Super-Media is used to study interaction in the media through communication and popular culture. The term Super-Media was used by Real (1989) in which he explains how Super-Media not only involves multicultural events such as the Olympic games, television programs, movies but it also includes today, for example, in digital platforms such as zoom, google meet and other platforms. As time passes, culture has been submerged in a cybercultural system. Cyberspace has helped create a world of increased accessibility to everyone without barriers to interact globally through digital platforms. Thanks to new technological advances, we can create these international exchanges that provide accessibility, inclusiveness and create a driving force for society through popular culture by building social and cultural spaces within the masses.

Points of reflection on the learning experience

The first point of reflection was International Exchange Live, where we used COIL to connect both Venezuelan students and students from Albany, New York to share the experience of the popular culture class versus their documentary class. The 'transmedia orientation' was important, and the learning process using social media, instant message applications, and electronics emails to be able to communicate visually and by text. Additionally, we used effective hypermediation, an important concept adopted by Carlos Scolari in which the COIL experience was held parallel to the communication experience between both classes. Subsequently, we continued with fieldwork which was an important experience that incorporated dynamics not included in the doctoral program like live fieldwork where we had the experience of recording spaces showing popular culture which allowed us to work as a team sharing visuals and culture.

We reflected on how communication was more personal during the COIL experience because it took place through the instant message applications and phone numbers instead, in addition to email. This is not very common, especially for the SUNY Albany students. This was one of the debates we had that in the North American university is more common to communicate by electronic email exclusively, other ways were too personal for them, and sometimes people do not feel comfortable sharing it.

We had great cultural diversity in our COIL experience due to the variety of geographic origins and cultural contexts which enriched the process very much and promoted a greater debate. We also had another kind of diversity in this case: the generational diversity due to the mix of undergraduate students that is the case in UCAB with undergraduate, master, and doctoral students of SUNY Albany. There was interaction between people of various ages and generations which of course, have a different approach to concepts and technology. This was evident with the presence of 'digital native' generations and others 'non digital natives' which does not happen frequently. It is more common on campus to interact with people of similar age range.

We had a final interaction between the groups. All the courses follow a 'bottleneck shape' in which we began with separate activities and sporadic encounters that were intensified and multiplied up to the 'finishing touch' when we created a documentary as final project that required the combination and collaboration of students from both classes.

Cultural Comparison and Common Latinoamerican Culture
Venezuelan side
The cultural exchange in this collaboration was done in a simple way due to the common Latin American presence in the groups. Retrospectively, on the Venezuelan side, when we receive the news about collaborating with a class in the United States, we all thought about the challenge that would represent, communicating in a language when we have a variety of levels. Nevertheless, the reality was different because we were coupled with a group whose native roots were close to ours which lead them to use Spanish to speak and worked with us to develop the class objectives which not only contrasted two different cultures: the American and Venezuelan but also included the dual vision from them (SUNY) with the American and Latin American cultures.
American side
In regards to the COIL encounter between UCAB and SUNY-Albany, this was influenced by the culture which was fundamental for the learning process. Despite the different levels of command

of Spanish in the Albany students, this did not prevent the collaboration between both countries to achieve the objectives and overcome the existent barriers among the groups. In addition, this exchange was enriched by the different ideologies, social classes, identities, and values between students of various academic levels (undergraduate and graduates) who contribute with the learning outcome of both groups through the formation of 'learning cultures.'

The common language of both groups was vital from the beginning, as we were all able to communicate in Spanish. Culture also played a predominant role, as most of the participants of this SUNY-Albany course we are of Latino descent, but at the same time everyone introduced his or her own culture which contributed to a successful collaboration by bringing different points of view and experiences. As Latinos living in the United States, most of many had very similar experiences and challenges in the past to those faced by UCAB students in Venezuela, which gave rise to intergroup empathy in front of the difficulties currently experienced in the Venezuelan context. According to Gladys, et.al., the learning cultures are understood as the group of behaviors, norms, values, beliefs, representations, and expectations about teaching and learning in which professors and students can do their respective works.

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Multi-Nodal Virtual Exchange (VE) Pedagogy Across Continents

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In this paper, we describe how we combined Project-Based Learning (PBL) with VE lecturing and transnational student project teams using a *multi-nodal pedagogic framework*. We found that this form of stratified PBL engages students in a transformative, intercultural journey where they emerge with rich insights into their own and others' subjective world views. Specifically, the course involved three universities from Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and the USA, multi-disciplinary departments, four different languages, lecturing participation from NGOs, and student groups from all three universities who worked with NGOs in Central Asia on a variety of real-world human rights issues. We will describe the manner in which we engaged the course, the challenges we encountered, and the feedback received from the participants (students and NGOs alike).

Multi-Nodal VE Pedagogy Explained

Existing literature points to a number of advantages offered by PBL, especially as a means for enriching student experience and learning capacities. As noted by Macgilchrist, Allert & Bruch (2020), PBL allows students to tackle "wicked problems" whilst also raising awareness about key matters like social justice and civic engagement. Coupled with a rich opportunity for cross-cultural exchanges between students, faculty, and others outside the university framework, we decided to push the boundaries and offer a stratified form of PBL for projects between students from different universities and regions. We wanted to expand PBL to allow for less static project work and afford the students an opportunity to enrich their understanding, deepen their perceptions of the materials they are engaging, and open up new vistas of insight through the involvement of different disciplines and different institutions. Because the projects are group-oriented, this stratified form of PBL afforded more diversity, greater cross-cultural thinking, and more critical consideration of the issues.

The model for creating this stratified PBL is a multi-nodal framework of educational and project exchange. Each node represents either an institution that houses the students, a departmental field of study within the institution, or an external organization or project provider with whom the variety of students from the different intuitions will work.
The Multi-Nodal Project Design:

Housing Rights and Social Media in Central Asia -
- Leonard Hammer and Liudmila Klimanova

An Example of Multi-Nodal Collaborative Learning

The nodes are connected to each other by virtue of shared lecturing (between institutions, participating project providers and guest lecturers) and through project work (between institutions and project providers). The nodal system allows participating institutions and departments to track activities and have faculty exchange ideas and lecturing, maintains departmental autonomy (as some departments might desire to stress specific activities like social policy or language study), and affords a broader picture for student involvement as they too understand the relationships being developed.

The cross-institutional involvement that we established at the University of Arizona ("UA") entailed a joint-form course and eventual project work involving students from UA, the American University of Central Asia ("AUCA) located in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and the University of Saint Peter the Great (St. Petersburg) located in Saint Petersburg, Russia. The students from UA were from the Human Rights Practice (HRP) graduate program and from the undergraduate Russian and Slavic Studies (RSSS) program. Students from AUCA and St. Petersburg were from the fields of law, human rights, political science, communications, and international relations.

For UA's part, inter-departmental coursework arose due to the distinct advantages offered by the relationship, including leveraged contacts leading to richer student projects and that each department desired a form of cross-cultural engagement. Further, given the work of the HRP program in Russia and Central Asia, and the capacity of RSSS students to not only use the *lingua franca* of the area, but also intermesh socially and culturally, the desire to work together was quite stark. Indeed, both departments envision the creation of a future form of joint degree and joint classes in other areas as well.

It also is worth noting that both UA Departments already had in place the framework for externalizing PBL in the online format. RSSS already instituted language instruction through cultural virtual exchanges and community-based project work, working on projects with organizations in Kazakhstan and Russia, and they desired to enhance their advanced language courses with a cross-continental PBL component in a virtual setting (thus establishing broader avenues for student engagement). The HRP program already relied on external guest lectures throughout all its courses, as they strive to incorporate voices and views from around the world,

offering support where feasible to NGOs and community groups through guest lecturing fees and assistive project work. Thus, the HRP program already maintained 5-6 video guest lectures in every class offered (with over 350 such guest lectures in the past 4 years from over 60 countries) and there is a PBL component in every class along with group work (usually cohorts of 3-4 students) whereby students work with the instructor and community members on real-world issues from around the globe. Thus, each department realized that they were already engaged in this stratified form of PBL given past experiences in project creation with external project providers that involved students from other universities. For HRP the multi-nodal structure began on a smaller scale through joint courses with AUCA, running for example a summer Strategic Litigation course with students from Central Asia that included lectures from faculty and regional NGOs. As a precursor to the course with RSSS, HRP moved the multi-nodal model further forward by creating a housing rights course that was more interactive given the integration of PBL group projects.

Aside from students' enjoying the work on real-world projects that affords them the opportunity to apply their knowledge, stratified PBL allows for deeper insights into other worlds, other people, and other cultures that students might not acquire when working on an internal project with their peers at the same institution or same department. We quickly realized that adding on new nodes to incorporate other institutions and project providers was quite easy and pretty seamless once the approach of joint lecturing was understood, such that the multi-nodal framework is easily achievable (even without external grant funding) as the desire to engage in such forms of course structures and interaction by all involved parties, including faculty (given the ensuing upgrade to the classroom) and project providers (given the benefits that accrue to them through the projects).

The multi-nodal course included NGOs involved in the environment, gender issues, housing rights, and governance in Central Asia, and it was decided, after a suggestion from one of the NGOs, that student-created podcasts would be an effective tool for disseminating information to the public, a strong desire by all the involved NGOs. Thus, the lecturing structure and materials included NGOs who focused on narrative creation (such as the New Media Advocacy Project), lecturers with media experts (such as the UA Film and Journalism Departments), and Central Asian NGOs who could offer insights into the region and expand upon the project issues. We also had former HRP graduate students lecture on their podcasting capstone projects, as that greatly assisted the students in recognizing that the projects were feasible. Additional workshops were offered on team building and cultural training.

The establishment of groups was carried out by students choosing NGOs pursuant to their interests, career goals, or individual skills (such as language capacity). Group roles also were put into place to ensure proper scheduling and meeting deadlines, technical aspects of project creation, language issues, narrative writing, and communication between project providers and the group as well as with the faculty from all institutions.

Like any form of group work with students, it was important to establish clarity within the group regarding their work and the timeframes involved, ensure for student involvement across the board by all members of the group, maintain ongoing oversight over group members through assignment work and tracking group work as it emerged, and ensuring that effective communication was taking place between the students and project providers. This also involved maintaining viable group dynamics between students to ensure for functioning teams, using ongoing student meetings and class reports. Scheduled time frames were put into place to allow a graduated final public product to emerge in a way that was achievable and possible for the

students. According to Larmer and Mergendoller (2015), a public product adds to the project design's motivating power, encouraging high-quality work and 'raising the stakes' as students must abide by an established timeline and produce a tangible outcome or propose a solution to a real-life problem. Setting the performance bar high for students enhances the social dimension of learning and offers an opportunity to discuss product design elements with potential stakeholders, audience, and experts.

Setting concrete learning objectives

Group tracking and project production can be addressed through clear learning objectives set by each partner in the multi-nodal structure. For example, given the focus on the application of Russian language skills to real-world tasks, the RSSS objectives included specific goals associated with professional careers involving intercultural communication in a workplace.

At the end of this project, students were expected to acquire the skills necessary to collaborate with others in a professional setting where Russian skills are required to accomplish a professional meaningful task. During group activities, RSSS students acted as translators and interpreters for NGO representatives and students who did not speak Russian during weekly team meetings, fieldwork, and interviews with experts. For the assessment component of the project, RSSS students were expected to demonstrate the skill of preparing short communications and reports in specialised Russian after attending guest lectures organized by UA Human Rights Program. Students applied language skills and the knowledge of the Russian speaking world in planning and producing social media such as podcasts, social video ads, and other forms of communication tools for a 'real' client. Along with these professional tasks involving foreign language skills, students also learned to establish realistic timelines and effectively coordinate activities with transnational team members from various cultural backgrounds and NGO representatives.

Evaluation and Reflection

In PBL, assessment practices and continuous reflection and reevaluation help ensure that all students are supported in the learning process. Weekly checkpoints and meetings with the teams create a culture of high productivity and ensure deeper personal engagement with a project task. Traditional student assessment methods may not be appropriate when student PBL teams work for a real "client". Sufficient flexibility in meeting intermediary goals then allows for a learning environment where students learn to handle professional life situations. In the multi-nodal VE program design, it was important to establish mutual accountability across culturally diverse educational systems and provide tools for continuous assessment. Weekly reflections allowed the students to keep track of their team's progress and their individual contributions to the project as the course moved forward. Examples of weekly reflections include:

- Describe what your international team did this past week, and your personal contribution to the group activity.
- Describe what new information, skills and knowledge you learned during this week's activities. Did you have any discoveries or "aha" moments?
- Describe any problems and challenges you encountered this week with regard to interpersonal communication, understanding culture, and project logistics. How did you resolve these problems?
- Describe what you particularly enjoyed doing this week and state how (if) you applied your language and culture skills to a concrete task or situation.

At the end of the project, all participants submitted a longer reflective essay where they summarized what they learned from the experience. The post-project reflection targeted individual learning gains and allowed us to better understand the impact of the muti-nodal project design on students' learning outcomes. For the students, reflecting on their involvement in the project created an opportunity to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and consider their experience as a step towards professionalization and a possible professional career pathway. Examples of post-project summative prompts were:

- Describe a formal profile of your group's international NGO partner: how their organization is structured; what types of activities they support; how they manage funds, etc.
- Describe the social issue or problem your group's work supported in this project, and your personal contribution to this work: your role in the group, your responsibilities, etc.?
- Summarize the contents of your group's "product". Your summary should include the key information included in your podcast as well as details about the speakers and experts your group interviewed.
- Reflect on what you have learned from this project about:
  a. the region and city where the NGO is based (e.g., the city of Osh, etc.);
  b. the people who live in that region;
  c. the social issue or problem in that region that your NGO intends to solve.
  d. the personal skills and expertise needed to work in an NGO based in the post-Soviet space (from what you know about this organization).
- Share any additional thoughts about the value of this project for your learning needs and future career goals.

Suggested Ways and Means for Building a Multi-Nodal VE Framework

Engage guest lectures (especially virtually) as a means of initiating work with external providers. Use the COIL method where desired to establish contacts with other institutions.

- Who are your existing contacts that can be leveraged for guest lecturing, project work, or course creation?
- Who on campus do you desire to work with or have as a guest lecturer?
- What other departments would assist your PBL objectives to create a more enriched experience for the students?
- Do you know colleagues or organizations that seek out student work?
- Are there real-world projects your students can work on as independent studies, capstones?

Consider how various components ('nodes') work together.

- What pieces need to be fleshed out?
- How do components interact in your project?

The Product Square Sheet will flesh out your participants, audiences, products, experts, and guest lectures, and contribute to the overall multi-node project design.

The Product Square and Multi-Nodal Project Design Elements (adapted from the 2018 NFLRC PBLL Institute).

Disciplines (Students in what disciplines will participate in this Multi-modal project?)	Corresponding disciplinary objectives (What is ONE most important teaching objective/learning outcome in each discipline listed in the right column?)
Discipline 1 Discipline 2 Discipline 3	Learning Objective 1 Learning Objective 2 Learning Objective 3
Combined Teaching Objective(s) (Looking at the disciplinary objectives outlined above, what will be the overarching purpose of this multi-nodal project?)	
Given the combined disciplinary objectives, the meaningful purpose of this investigation will be to engage students in…	
Problem, Question, Challenge (What real life problem or question will motivate students to engage in this multi-nodal project? Formulate a concrete question your students will be asked to answer by engaging in sustained inquiry and collaboration with team members?)	**Authentic, Real-World Purpose** (What is the authentic purpose of this multi-nodal project for the community?
In this project students will address the real-life problem of…	In this project, students will help…

International Student Teams (What countries or programs will be represented in the international teams? What will be the working language of this multi-nodal collaboration? What will each group of students contribute to the project? (etc., the knowledge of the region, language skills, etc.)	Organization Partners (community, businesses, experts, etc.) (What community partners, businesses, professional networks will serve as consultants, trainers/experts, goal-setters, 'clients' in this multi-nodal project?)
This project will engage students and instructors from… The working language of the project will be …	The partners for this project will be…
Tangible or Intangible "real-life" Product (What product will students produce that demonstrates the target skills and knowledge of this multi-nodal project?)	**Public Audience for the Product** (What real-life public audiences will use the Product your students will produce?)
Students will create/design/develop a plan for…	The Product created by the teams will be 'used' by…
Why would your students and partners care? (In what ways is your project impactful? Why would your students and partners want to do it?)	
For the students, this project will help… For the target audience, this project will help… For the community partners, this project will help…	

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Are we preparing our students with the competences and skills to meet the local and global challenges of the 21st century and beyond?

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The United Nations has issued a global call for a "Decade of Action" to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and stressed that it is essential to think of new ways to accelerate SDGs action. Universities need to educate for change and to prepare students for the future and its coming challenges. This does however require a paradigm shift from a "business as usual" approach. According to Alsop, Dippo, & Zandvliet, 2007, it is possible for practitioners (in our case university teachers in sustainability) to closely examine their role as change agents and decision-makers through their own problematisation of the teaching and learning processes within their work contexts, and through their own reflexive practice (Hong & Lawrence, 2011).

The sustainability challenges of the 21st century is also a challenge for rethinking learning and pedagogy in Higher Education. This leads us to the million-dollar question of our session at IVEC: **in what ways are we preparing our students with the competences and skills needed to meet the local and global challenges of the 21st century and beyond?**

This question is explored by the consortium of the capacity building project VAMOS. In our session, you will be introduced to the project, and two project partners Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University and Federal University of Pernambuco will share their experience.

Introducing VAMOS

VAMOS (Virtual Exchange to Tackle Wicked Problems: Latin American and European Collaboration on Education for Sustainable Development) is two-year capacity-building project within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme running.

The project gathers six Latin American universities (Brazil and Honduras), two European universities (Sweden and Italy), and one NGO with leading experts in virtual exchange (UNICollaboration).

Overview of members in VAMOS
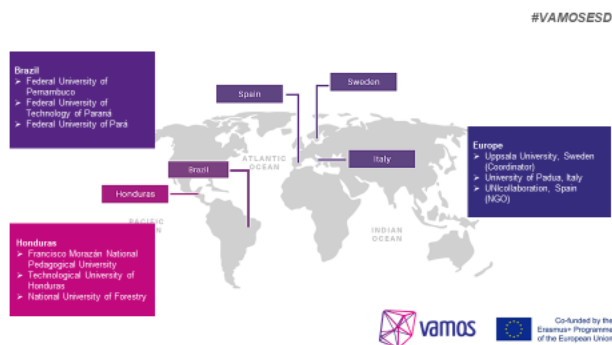
The aim is to jointly co-create virtual pilots in which students from our partner universities will work with the local/global sustainability issues (i.e. wicked problems).

Change Project Approach

The Swedish International Centre of Education for Sustainable Development (SWEDESD) facilitated the reflective assignments in VAMOS on transformative learning, which was based on the Change Project Approach. The purpose with the assignment was to guide the local teacher teams to identify problems that are significant in their contexts and begin to propose and plan activities that lead to transformation of practices in their institutions for education for sustainable development.

Diaz and Moncada at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Francisco Morazán (Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University) share an overview of the experience as part of the program. The university is based in Honduras, and by embracing the motto "Educar para transformar"(Let´s educate in order to transform) has found the perfect niche within the VAMOS Project and its objectives. A great example of this can be found in the initiative on environmental awareness, "Earth Chair Dr. Gonzalo Cruz Calderón", which is compulsory for all the undergraduate majors at the university.

During the first VAMOS workshops on transformative learning and wicked problems, they openly presented the projects students embarked on which are built around topics based on the following subjects: environment conservation, geology and earth sciences, solid waste management, vector control activities, risk management and climate change adaptation, reforestation and watershed management, and conservation of biodiversity.

In the central campus in Tegucigalpa, the capital city, activities in which teaching, research and community extension overlap are constantly developing. The pandemic has pushed the school to carry on with online activities like seminars, conferences, webinars and environmental workshops. The topics addressed as part of the workshops range from water conservation, biodiversity protection, reforestation projects across the university's regional branches, cultivation of plants attractive to pollinators to dengue and zika control and covid -19 prevention.

In the regional campus in Santa Rosa de Copán which is in the western region of our country and is home to more than 600 students. Some other activities have also been developed which are relevant to the local context and area, these activities range from fire prevention talks, risks management workshops, green theatre, eco-friendly picnics with children from schools along the local communities, ethnic biological fairs, school gardens and home gardens during the

pandemic. Nowadays, they are working on environmental education projects with local ethnic communities.

VAMOS project has also led to identifying current and potential stake holders. As of now, several activities are carried out with the assistance of strategic alliances with government agencies such as the Environment Ministry, Contingency Permanent Commission (COPECO), Water and Aqueducts National Service (SANAA), The National Conservation and forestry development Institute (ICF), The Regional Interinstitutional Board for Climate Change (MERICC), Santa Rosa´s Civil Society (ADELSAR), and the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ/PROCAMBIO) and private institutions.

The initial workshops on transformative learning also highlighted challenges still ahead, some of the most salient being:
- Endowing middle, secondary and higher education curriculum with a local and real context for every region in the country
- Encourage more educational and impactful practices in relation to ESD.
- Promote more empowerment and involvement of educators and learners in initiatives of transformative learning
- Engage in collaborative projects with national and international universities
- Push for more social, economic and environmental resilience in local communities

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The Impacts of Covid-19 Around the Globe Through the Lens of Higher Education Students Echoes from a Virtual Students' Conference

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Abstract

This presentation offered the student perspective of a virtual conference conducted as part of a virtual exchange project with 50 university students from Germany, Portugal, Canada, and the U.S. during the fall semester of 2020. Student representatives from all four countries either presented online or in a video clip. Students were asked questions in three categories but focused on aspects of their choice. Categories included 1) How did COVID-19 impact them personally, learning, and within the ProGlobe project, 2) What similarities and differences were observed by students in each country in regard to protocol and behavior, and 3) What were their takeaways from the ProGlobe project experience related to collaboration, digital, and interpersonal skills? Students provided a brief synopsis of their experiences and how the project and COVIID-19 had impacted their lives. Project coordinators also shared how COVID-19 had shaped the project tasks and student deliverables. Highlights identified by students included global connections, global awareness and perspectives, English language skills, social opportunities, exposure to other disciplines, and communication and collaboration using various technology formats. Of note was the comment by all students that they recognized that, as humans, we are all so much more alike than we are different. Coordinators discussed how the impact of COVID-19 improved student confidence, digital skillset and interpersonal engagement as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown and mandated online classes for all four countries. Observations included an increase in student confidence and preparedness in technology and digital collaboration and international peer interviews as well as stronger student outcomes in student presentations, and student engagement in Q&A sessions. This virtual exchange conference aimed to encourage communication among all four countries to raise awareness on the impact of environmental and social issues within the context of COVID-19. In this project, students evaluated, discussed, and reflected on the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic had on their country and the world. Based on their experiences, students in this presentation will discuss how the dynamic of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their participation and engagement as well as discuss the similarities and differences experienced in each country within a global context. The results point to the importance of using the student perspective and reflections to reveal the impact of the pandemic on learning. It also helped to identify the successes and challenges experienced in all aspects of the project for the purpose of continuous development and improvement for VE projects.

A Practice Report on *Teaching Language Internationally* in Germany and Canada

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Abstract

This practice report describes the experience of developing, implementing, and evaluating a COIL course on the topic of language teaching. A key characteristic of the course is that it was delivered as a single co-taught course rather than two separate courses with a shared COIL component. The collaboration explored possibilities for delivering a common course experience fully shared by students in Germany and Canada. This paper focuses on challenges and solutions related to attaining complete overlap in class time, assignments, and course content.

Participants in the course included a total of 25 students and three instructors. Of these, 15 students and two instructors were from Paderborn University in Germany, while 10 students and one instructor were from the University of Alberta in Canada. All of the students were enrolled in programs leading to teacher certification. Since the German students were studying to be English teachers, English was able to be used as a shared language. All course participants met synchronously for three hours, one day each week over a period of 7 weeks to discuss current approaches to teaching English and other languages in native and nonnative speaker environments. Students received credit for the course from their home institutions, but the course generally operated as a single combined class.

Challenges in aligning class times and semester dates are common for COIL courses, and these challenges were amplified by the aim of running a fully-shared synchronous class for students in Germany and Canada. Although options were limited and institutional flexibility was required, it was ultimately possible for the two groups to meet together at common times. With respect to aligning assignments, challenges stemmed largely from differing institutional cultures and student expectations. The Canadian students generally expected full details and instructions for assignments to be available from the outset of the course. Given the difficulties in meeting this expectation in an international collaboration taught for the first time by three different instructors, one key strategy was to raise students' awareness about the complexities of offering the course and the resulting need for flexibility. In return, the instructors committed to being flexible for students. With respect to aligning course content, there were challenges related to meeting teacher certification requirements in two countries simultaneously, as well as ensuring sufficient shared background knowledge among students and instructors. Focusing on commonalities in approaches to language education between the two countries made it possible to address certification requirements. Emphasizing course topics and readings that were familiar to all instructors, and building from common interests, provided a means for addressing the

shared knowledge among instructors. Shared experiences of language learning and studying in programs leading to professional teacher certification provided a useful basis for shared background knowledge among students.

Evaluation of the course suggested that it was effective and that it was possible to sufficiently overcome the challenges of offering a common course for students in two countries using a fully-shared synchronous format. Future plans are to offer the course again and to continue developing it based on student feedback.

In this practice report, we describe the experience of developing, implementing, and evaluating a COIL course titled "Teaching Language Internationally". The collaboration involved instructors and students from Germany and Canada, and the course content focused on approaches to teaching second, or additional, languages. A key characteristic of the course is that we aimed to deliver it as a single co-taught course rather than two separate courses that shared a COIL component. Although we work in different countries and have slightly different areas of research, we are all involved in language teacher education and help future English teachers, or teachers of other languages, to professionalize their skills. For this reason, our collaborative project explored possibilities for delivering a common course experience to students in two different countries by attaining nearly 100 percent overlap in course content, assignments, and class time. This paper highlights some of the challenges that we encountered and subsequently overcame in working toward the goal of course parity.

Course Context and Description

Our teaching collaboration was initially arranged within the context of a larger project funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The project was called "We CAN virtuOWL," which is a play on words that combines the idea of virtual collaboration with abbreviated geographical names for Western Canada and Ostwestfalen-Lippe (OWL). The project provided funding for international teaching collaborations between German Universities in the OWL region of the state of North Rhine Westphalia and Canadian Universities in the province of Alberta. In total, 11 COIL collaborations were funded from 2020-2021. Funding included a SUNY COIL workshop series over three days, funds for a student assistant on the German side and mobility costs for instructors to meet in person in Canada and Germany.

Our collaborative course was on the topic of teaching languages, and all of the students were enrolled in programs leading to teacher certification. Participants in the course included a total of 25 students and 3 instructors. Of these, 15 students and 2 instructors were from Paderborn University in Germany, while 10 students and 1 instructor were from the University of Alberta in Canada. Since the German students were studying to be English teachers, English was available as a shared language. All course participants met synchronously for three hours, one day each week over a period of 7 weeks to discuss current approaches to teaching English and other languages in native and nonnative speaker environments. Students received credit for the course from their home institutions. The German students were able to choose the course from a selection of course offerings on the topic of language teaching. In Canada, it was offered as an elective.

During class sessions, students received structured input from the instructors and then worked in mixed German-Canadian groups to carry out interactive tasks. Throughout the term, students completed a series of assignments related to the in-class activities. They also completed a final project that involved working in groups to design and demonstrate a language teaching

lesson for other students in the course. The final projects were presented on the last day of class.

Whereas others have described innovative work on collaborations between courses from different disciplines (e.g., SUNY COIL Center n.d.; Zhang & Pearlman 2018), our collaboration involved courses that were similar enough to aim for complete overlap and full co-teaching. Our COIL approach had many similarities with one described by Dorner (2018). In aiming for course parity, we sought to create a shared synchronous experience, but one that would also bring different perspectives. Furthermore, although students were assessed by instructors from their home institution, we hoped they would feel as if they had three instructors, each of whom offered a different perspective on the course topic.

Challenges and Solutions Related to Class Time

International differences in university semester dates and time zones are a common challenge in offering COIL courses (SUNY COIL Center 2019). In our course collaboration, these challenges were amplified given our intent to deliver the course in a synchronous format with class sessions that were fully-shared at the two universities. Despite the 8-hour time difference, we were able to identify a suitable 3-hour timeframe for our weekly class meetings. Although this meant scheduling the course in the evening in Germany, the 5:00-8:00 p.m. time slot still fell within standard class times and was not unfamiliar to the instructors and students there. Keeping the course within standard class times at both universities was important for ensuring that students would be able to enroll in the course and fit it into their timetables.

Finding sufficient overlap in both universities' semester dates was a significant challenge, since there were very few instances of overlap that were long enough to run an entire course. We opted to offer the course during the Canadian Spring intersession. This semester is approximately 7 weeks in length, which we had determined to be the minimum amount of time needed for the course. The Spring intersession coincided with the mid-portion of the German Summer term. Although the Summer term was approximately twice as long as the Spring intersession, we were able to offer the course in a compressed format at the German university.

Challenges and Solutions Related to Course Assignments

As others have reported (e.g., King Ramírez 2020) differing institutional cultures and student expectations can create challenges in COIL implementation. In our case, many of these challenges were related to course assignments and assessment. For example, students at the Canadian university in our collaboration tend to prefer having a series of smaller assignments rather than only a few larger ones that would be higher stakes and count for a greater percentage of their final course grade. They also tend to expect more detailed instructions and guidelines for assignments, and to receive all of the details on the first day of class. We anticipated that meeting these expectations would be difficult given the many uncertainties that we faced as instructors who were new to COIL and who were designing and teaching a course together for the first time.

One strategy that we used for assignments was to provide as much information as possible at the beginning of the course and to add details once we felt that we were in a better position to finalize our plans. Another strategy was to raise students' awareness that the course spanned differing national and institutional cultures. We expressed our commitment to be flexible and patient toward students and asked them to be flexible and patient in return.

Despite the challenges related to assignments, we managed to develop a common set of assignments with only minor differences in how the assignments were collected, assessed, and weighted in the calculation of final course grades. Consequently, we were able to attain our goal for parity in course assignments and student workload. Most assignments were related to weekly group activities carried out in class. Using a portfolio-style assessment made it possible to collect several smaller assignments from the Canadian students but only one larger assignment from the German students, while maintaining consistent tasks, instructions, and assessment criteria in both cases. As the final assignment for the course, students worked in groups to design and demonstrate a language-teaching lesson for other students in the course. These teaching demonstrations, known as micro-teaching, are commonly used as assignments in teacher education programs, and were familiar to students and instructors at both universities.

Challenges and Solutions Related to Course Content

With respect to course content, one major challenge was how to ensure that the course met program and curricular requirements for students in both countries. This challenge required particular attention since students were enrolled in teacher education programs, where a significant portion of the curriculum is determined by the government ministry of education responsible for teacher licensing and certification in the respective jurisdictions. Comparing the two sets of requirements revealed a large amount of overlap, and the similarities proved sufficient for developing a common course.

Another major challenge related to course content was ensuring a sufficient amount of shared background knowledge, both among instructors and also among students. As instructors, we addressed this challenge by emphasizing course topics and readings that were familiar to all of us. During our course development conversations, we were sometimes surprised to learn how many similarities already existed across the introductory courses that we regularly offered on the topic of language teaching. A long-established approach of distinguishing between productive language skills (speaking and writing) and receptive language skills (listening and reading) provided a common organizing principle that was prevalent in both countries. The international influence of the Common European Framework of Reference and a mutual interest in task-based language teaching provided further opportunities for shared course content. In selecting course readings, we were frequently able to identify readings that were familiar to all three of us, and in other cases, our strategy was to identify authors who were mutually familiar and then to settle on a specific text.

Shared background knowledge among students provided more uncertainty and was something over which we had less control. Based on our experience of teaching in our respective universities, we felt that we had some awareness of the kinds of knowledge and experiences that students often bring to our classes. While there is always an element of the unknown with respect to our students' background knowledge, not knowing what to expect from students from a different national and institutional context heightened our uncertainty. Highlighting the fact that language was both the medium of communication and the topic of the course provided a sufficient basis for shared knowledge and understanding. All of the students had experience with language learning and living in multilingual settings. Moreover, all were studying in programs leading to professional teacher certification. Within this framework of shared background knowledge, the different national contexts and students' individual experiences provided many opportunities for exchange and mutual learning.

Course Evaluation

In order to evaluate the course, we asked students to complete an anonymous online feedback form. All 25 students submitted the form, and their feedback suggested that the challenges related to offering a fully co-taught course had been sufficiently overcome for us to deliver an effective learning experience. In order to gauge students' overall impression of the course, we asked them to respond to the following feedback item: "Please rate the quality of instruction as it contributed to your learning in the course." Among the respondents, 8 students (32%) responded that it was excellent, 12 (48%) indicated that it was very good, and 5 (20%) responded that it was good. No students responded that it was fair or poor. In response to the feedback item, "The material covered in the course is relevant for your future profession," 17 students (68%) strongly agreed, 7 (28%) agreed, and 1 (4%) neither agreed nor disagreed. No students disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures suggest that language teacher preparation needs in both Germany and Canada were able to be met through a shared course.

Part of the rationale for delivering our course as a single entity was that we believed students might benefit from the diversity of perspectives that we each brought as instructors. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting this aim, we asked students to respond to the following feedback item: "Having lecturers from different universities supported developing a critical perspective of the subject matter." Among the respondents, 18 students (72%) strongly agreed, 6 (24%) agreed, and 1 (4%) neither agreed nor disagreed. No students disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures suggest that the students perceived the benefits of having co-instructors from the two countries and universities.

Additional student feedback in the form of comments indicated aspects of the course that students particularly appreciated, as well as their suggestions for improvement. Among aspects of the course that students liked, the most commonly mentioned was interacting with students from another country, which was seen as a way to gain insight into different perspectives. Students also expressed their appreciation for how the course assignments linked theory with practice and how the class sessions were activity-based and interactive. Additional aspects of the course that students liked included course organization and the opportunity for the German students to use English authentically.

With respect to class time, students were divided over whether class sessions should have been longer or shorter. Some indicated that more time would have allowed for more interaction, and some expressed the desire for more time in class to work on the final group project since they sometimes found it challenging to meet outside of class time. Others found 3-hour class sessions to be very long and would have at least liked more breaks during the class time. As we anticipated, several students expressed a desire for more detailed information about assignments and for assignment guidelines to be fully communicated at the beginning of the course. Additional suggestions for improving assignments included working in smaller groups and mixing the group membership more often. Although we included activities where students worked in new groups, they frequently carried out activities with the students in their final project group. Finally, with respect to course content, some students suggested that there could have been further linking of theory and practice, and some noted that there was some overlap in content between this course and other courses they had already taken on the topic of language teaching.

Considered collectively, student feedback indicated that the course was relevant and effective. Students particularly appreciated the opportunity for international learning and collaboration. We intend to offer the course again in the future and to incorporate students'

suggestions for revision and improvement. We also hope to expand our project to include opportunities for students to connect with schools in both countries and for the instructors to collaborate on research related to COIL.

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Training Future Foreign Language Teachers to Telecollaborate. A Student-Centered Practice Report on a Trilateral Virtual Exchange on Global Education Between Germany, Turkey, and Sweden

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A central goal of **global education** in foreign language education (FLE) is to support students to "think globally and act locally" (Cates 2013, p. 278). Likewise, modern approaches to task-based language teaching (TBLT) such as the concept of the **complex competence task** (CCT) are based on the premise that foreign language discourse competences are essential for today's learners to participate in sociocultural and political processes in the globalized reality of the 21st century (Hallet 2013). In an effort to account for these desiderates we conducted an almost four-months-long virtual exchange (VE) project between future and current English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Germany, Sweden, and Turkey. By following O'Dowd's (2019) transnational model of virtual exchange for global citizenship education, we strove for **conceptual synergy** between VE, global education, and TBLT to train our students to become telecollaborative teachers (Krengel 2021). Throughout the project, students compared and analyzed their teaching approaches and their local perspectives on global problems, including gender inequality, climate change, and plastic pollution. In transnational teams, they then designed their own VE projects, targeted at EFL learners in secondary education in their respective countries.

While the project idea originated at the university of Göttingen, the partners in Turkey and Sweden had multiple **reasons to participate**. These included providing opportunities for fostering language, cultural and digital-pedagogical competences to meet the demands and education policy requirements of increasingly multicultural, multilingual, and interconnected societies. The VE was seen as an opportunity to increase internationalization and student-active learning through collaboration.

Students reported on several challenges and learning outcomes. First, a high workload forced team members to find ways of sharing responsibilities as they worked on their shared lesson plans – e.g., by identifying individual strengths of students. To facilitate communication, they prioritized identifying time frames for synchronous collaboration and communication via instant messenger. When discussing global issues – such as the climate change impact of air travel – students in Germany reported that the project was a humbling experience: After debating the positive and negative effects of their travel experience, the lack of travel experience of some of their Turkish peers made them aware of their privilege to be able to afford plane tickets in the first place. Finally, students reported improved problem-solving skills when dealing with technical difficulties as well as improved language competences through authentic interaction.

Likewise, the **instructors** identified a set of benefits, challenges, and potential solutions. **Benefits** include that the project offered students hands-on experiences of working with English

as a shared lingua franca, specific examples for integrating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in their (future) classrooms and providing access and participation in extended cultural learning experiences without physical mobility. Among the **challenges** was finding ways to match the content and time slots between three diverging academic calendars and syllabi, keeping the workload manageable and preventing stereotyping. Potential **solutions** include reducing the number of tasks and digital tools, providing regular mentoring and guided reflection opportunities, and the integration of student facilitators to act as mediators.

Keywords: virtual exchange, global education, task-based language teaching

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Understanding Cities in a Global Context:
Perspectives on sustainability issues through virtual exchange

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The UN AGENDA 2030 unites countries worldwide around 17 sustainability goals. The goals are global, however they must be understood and dealt with locally, set against the sociopolitical complexities in different parts of the world. The virtual exchange (VE) project *Understanding Cities* engaged students from different disciplines and geographically distant locations in exploring and problematizing sustainability initiatives in their cities from local and global perspectives. The VE brought together students and teachers from Universidad Nacional de San Martin, Buenos Aires (Argentina), Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan (Poland), and Malmö University, Malmö (Sweden).

The point of departure in this VE was the UN SDG 11 focused on making cities "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." Two questions provided a starting point: In what ways is goal 11 addressed in the particular contexts of Buenos Aires, Malmö and Poznan? What are some possibilities and challenges involved in implementing different kinds of sustainability initiatives in the three urban settings? In transnational groups, students negotiated and explored a chosen topic and a critical question related to urban culture and sustainability. The collaborative process entailed exploring grassroots initiatives as well as official sustainability projects in the three cities. Finally, through a sequence of project tasks, each transnational group designed an educational, multimodal media campaign exhibiting the outcomes of their research and collaborative work.

As project teachers and VE practitioner researchers, we engaged in action research and collected data from students' reflective writing and co-creation of multimodal artifacts. In this practice report, we draw from student voices and present themes emerging from the participants' e-diaries. We focus on affordances of VE for fostering reflection, critical and multimodal literacies, and understandings of topics related to global citizenship education (Hauck, 2019; O'Dowd, 2019; Vasquez, 2020). We discuss how, although students found the topic challenging, multimodal communication and VE anchored in real-world issues facilitated glocal awareness as students problematized Agenda 2030 in relation to local contexts. Moreover, we acknowledge how, on the background of students' interactions and reflections, power dynamics between the Global North and South were also making noise.

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Insights Derived from Two Multinational COIL Exchange Contexts

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Abstract

This report is based on a presentation at IVEC 2021 about two ninety-minute collaborative online international learning (COIL) exchanges between (1) the University of the Ryukyus in Japan and Universiti Malaysia Pahang and (2) the University of the Ryukyus in Japan and Asian-Pacific COIL partner institutions, notably the University of Hawai'i. Such initiatives cannot be accomplished without the efforts of numerous parties: students especially, but also faculty and staff. Preparing our presentation and this report has been a heuristic process that helped us to better understand all of these actors' perspectives and to develop a more inclusive and organic approach toward future COIL exchanges. We hope our account will be of use to anyone who intends to develop and improve such efforts. Two faculty and two administrative staff have contributed to this report by providing descriptions of the exchanges as well as insights and interpretations of participant responses to questionnaires about their experiences. The report will briefly discuss an initial (2018) COIL exchange and how it informed future efforts. Thereafter, an online intensive study program (OISP) held in 2021 will be discussed in further detail. Results from participant responses to a pre- and post-exchange questionnaire using the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) will be used as a measure of the OISP exchange's impact on participants' intrapersonal development. An assessment of program implementation and results based on descriptive statistics will follow. Finally, we will discuss the OISP program from the perspective of the administrative support staff involved in coordinating and making such COIL exchanges possible.

Keywords: COIL; BEVI; Student Perceptions of online exchanges

About the University of the Ryukyus' Inter-University Exchange Project

In 2018 the University of the Ryukyus received a grant for the "Inter-University Exchange Project" from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). The main objective of the project was to foster global leadership in students toward attainment of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) throughout the Pacific Island Region. The project also aimed to promote regionally beneficial educational initiatives through collaborative online international learning ("COIL") with partner institutions.

In line with our university's educational goals for inter-university exchange projects, this project aimed to increase student mobility between partner institutions through its short (less than three months) and long-term (six months to one year) study abroad programs by providing financial support to both inbound and outbound exchange students (University of the Ryukyus 2022). Limitations on international travel in the light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic led to

a complete halt of all face-to-face student exchange programs administered by the University for 2020-2021. In response, the University redoubled its COIL initiatives to ensure a safe and sustainable way of providing students with avenues for globally based learning and to maintain international educational exchanges with our partner universities.

An Initial COIL Exchange

The University of the Ryukyus (UR) and the Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), two COIL partner universities, held an initial COIL exchange in 2018 that informed our future initiatives by indicating that single asynchronous exchanges might be positively viewed but not necessarily conducive toward cultural convergence.

Peer evaluation has been used effectively in oral performance situation such as the context of this COIL exchange (Topping 2021). The exchange required participants from both universities to view 12 three-minute presentations by participating UR students and score each presentation using a five-item rubric, awarding a maximum of ten points per rubric item. Scores were subsequently distributed anonymously to participants. 13 fourth year students from UR viewed the presentations face to face and 14 third year UMP students watched videos of the same presentations asynchronously.

A post-activity participant questionnaire (with participants' consent) shows that the scoring behaviour of participants was substantially different and can easily be divided by university, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Mean Scores and Differences by Presentation*

	Mean Scores		
	U of R	UMP	Difference
Presentation 1	8.06	6.19	1.87
Presentation 2	8.80	7.31	1.49
Presentation 3	8.50	6.37	2.13
Presentation 4	8.40	7.96	0.44
Presentation 5	8.12	6.08	2.04
Presentation 6	8.17	6.33	1.84
Presentation 7	8.64	8.01	0.63
Presentation 8	7.36	6.05	1.31
Presentation 9	8.21	7.03	1.18
Presentation 10	7.55	6.65	0.90
Presentation 11	8.18	6.68	1.50
Presentation 12	8.39	6.83	1.56
Average	8.20	6.79	1.41
Min	7.36	6.05	1.31
Max	8.80	8.01	0.79

UR participants ($N = 13$) gave each other an average score or 8.2 on 10, with a minimum mean score of 7.36 and a maximum mean score of 8.8. UMP participants ($N = 14$) gave the same presentations an average score of 6.79 points, with a minimum mean score of 6.05 points and a maximum mean score of 8.01 points. On average, there was a difference of 1.41 points out of ten in the assessment behaviour between participants from the two universities, which translates into 14% or a two-letter grade span.

Comments about presentations were similarly disparate according to participants' university. Whereas UR participants' reactions were mostly positive and reacted to the content of presentations, UPM participants' comments were more varied, but generally contained some criticism related to the peer evaluation rubric.

Results from this initial effort indicated that a more extended program with more intensive opportunities for deliberate exchange might be more effective, which is what was planned and implemented as OISP.

The Online Intensive Study Program for 2020-21

The Online Intensive Study Program (OISP) 2020-21 was planned as an alternative to the Project's in-person student exchange program, marking our first attempt at holding both inbound and outbound intensive study programs simultaneously. Participants were eight students from the University, including one international student from Palau, and seven students from the University of Hawaii at Hilo (4), Kauai Community College (2) and the University of Guam (1). The program was held entirely in English, with lectures and student discussions held synchronously on Zoom. A common Google Drive and a Flipgrid space were set up to share course information and assignments with instructors and participants. Program contents were recorded and uploaded onto the Project's YouTube channel to aid asynchronous learning and post-session revision. Students were divided into intercultural groups to work on a final, seven-minute visual presentation centered on a specific SDG and how their chosen goal could be achieved in their area/territory of choice.

Student learning outcomes were evaluated and appraised through a set of rubrics measuring core skills arising from international collaboration, particularly key competencies such as interpersonal engagement, management of group and personal needs and understanding of intragroup diversity. Participants were also evaluated on their understanding of the 17 SDGs and awareness of how they overlap and interconnect, as well as how proposed solutions for solving the problems of a given SDG may effect goal achievement other SDGs (tradeoffs). An additional set of rubrics (as published in the initial course description) were used to assess the content and quality of final intercultural group presentations (see figure 1).

Date/Time (all times in JST)	Details ※Program contents and dates are subject to change
March 1st to 3rd, 2021 [Asynchronous]	BEVI Assessment #1
March 4th, 2021 09:00~12:00 [Synchronous]	Program Orientation 09:00~09:30 ICT Workshop 09:30~10:00 Talk by Mr. Wataru Gima (guest contributor) Icebreakers "H.I.R.E Love" Workshop (by Prof. George MacLean, Foreign Languages Unit, Global Education Institute, University of the Ryukyus and Mr. Wataru Gima)
March 5th, 2021 09:00~10:30 [Synchronous]	Pre-Program COIL ② Orientation on the Pacific Island Region: Learning about the Pacific Island Region. (by Prof. Ryuji Ishikawa, Faculty of Regional and Global Studies, University of the Ryukyus)
March 8th, 2021 09:00~11:00 [Synchronous]	Pre-Program COIL ③ Orientation on Okinawa Learning about the history and culture of Okinawa (by Ms. Yukari Akamine, Global Education Center, University of the Ryukyus)
March 9th to 10th, 2021 [Asynchronous]	(Autonomous Learning) (1) Making and uploading a short self-introduction video on Flipgrid (2) Completing H.I.R.E. Love SDGs worksheet
March 11th, 2021 09:00~11:00 [Synchronous]	Collaborative session with University of the Ryukyus Ecological Campus Student Organization (Dialogue and Campus Cleanup)
March 12th, 2021 09:00~10:30 [Synchronous]	Lecture ① 09:00~10:30 "Sato-shima" (by Prof. Brian Yamamoto, Natural Science, Kauai Community College) Lecture ② 10:45~12:15 "Conservation of Homestead Windbreaks and Disaster Prevention" (by Dr. Chen Bixia, Faculty of Agriculture, University of the Ryukyus)
March 13th, 2021 [Synchronous]	Lecture ③ 09:00~10:30 "SDG #14 Life Below Water"
	(by Dr. Evonne Yiu, United Nations University - Institute for Advanced Studies on Sustainability) Student Collaboration ① 10:45~12:15
March 16th, 2021 [Synchronous]	Lecture ④ (Asynchronous) Group discussion based on "Migration and Soft Power of Uchinanchu" by Dr. Munehiro Machida, Professor Emeritus, University of the Ryukyus Lecture ⑤ 10:00~12:00 "Language Empowerment and Revitalization" (by Associate Prof. Yumiko Ohara, College of Hawaiian Language (KHUOK), University of Hawaii at Hilo and Prof. Masahide Ishihara, Faculty of Regional and Global Studies, University of the Ryukyus)
March 17th, 2021 [Synchronous]	Lecture ⑥ 09:00~10:30 "Thought and Theory on Global Leadership" (by Prof. Ryuji Ishikawa, Faculty of Regional and Global Studies, University of the Ryukyus) Lecture ⑦ 10:45~12:15 Dialogue with Okinawa high school students
March 18th, 2021 [Synchronous]	Lecture ⑧ 09:00~10:30 "Sustainable Agriculture and Agricultural Resilience to Climate Change" (by Prof. Mohammad H. Golabi, Division of Natural Sciences, University of Guam) Student Collaboration ② 10:45~12:15
March 19th, 2021 [Synchronous]	09:00~11:00 Final presentations and closing ceremony
March 22nd, 2021 [Asynchronous]	Summary and looking back BEVI Assessment #2
2 weeks after program ends	Submission of program evaluation and report on learning outcomes
Within 2 months of program conclusion	BEVI Assessment #3

Figure 1. Program Schedule for OISP AY2020-21

BEVI Findings for OISP 2020-21

The Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI 2021) was used to analyze the effects of the program. The BEVI is an online assessment tool able to determine the participants' traits such as basic openness, the tendency to (or not to) stereotype others, self and emotional awareness, as well as global engagement. It is widely used for assessing changes in participants due to the impact of international experiences (Shealy 2016). Figure 2 shows the Aggregate Profile of the T1/T2 report for pre- and post-program changes.

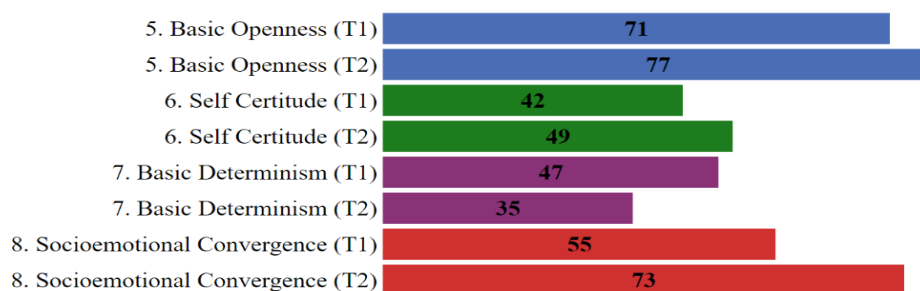|	
5. Basic Openness (T1)	71
5. Basic Openness (T2)	77
6. Self Certitude (T1)	42
6. Self Certitude (T2)	49
7. Basic Determinism (T1)	47
7. Basic Determinism (T2)	35
8. Socioemotional Convergence (T1)	55
8. Socioemotional Convergence (T2)	73

Figure 2. Program BEVI Results for Scales 5 to 8 (T1: Before, T2: After the Program)

There are 17 basic assessment indices in BEVI, but for discussions in this paper we selected the ones critical and most commonly used for assessing international experience impact. An overview of all the BEVI scales is available at BEVI 2021b. Figure 2 shows the Aggregate

Profile of the T1/T2 report for pre- and post-program changes, based on participant responses to questionnaires (obtained with participants' consent). It includes the following information: Basic Openness (No.5: openness and honesty about the experience of basic thoughts, feelings, and needs), Self Certitude (No.6: strong sense of will; impatient with excuses for difficulties; emphasizes positive thinking; disinclined toward deep analysis), Basic Determinism (No.7: prefers simple explanations for differences/behavior; believes people don't change/strong will survive; troubled life history), and Socioemotional Convergence (No.8: open, aware of self/other, larger world; thoughtful, pragmatic, determined; sees world in shades of gray, such as the need for self-reliance while caring for vulnerable others). These are scales denoting a person's basic traits, rather like a core personality, so compared to Scales No. 13 to 17 (to be introduced later), they are said to be harder to change unless the experience had a reasonably strong impact. The changes in Scales No. 5 to 8 show a very positive effect as a result of the international online exchange. Five points (in percentile) indicates a significant change from Time 1 (before the program) to Time 2 (after the program). Through the program participation, Basic Openness increased by 6 points, Self Certitude by 7 points, Socioemotional Convergence by 18 points, while Basic Determinism decreased by 12 points. This group demonstrated high basic openness before the program and this improved further after the program. The changes under self certitude, basic determinism, and socioemotional convergence illustrated that the group of participants overall became aware of different viewpoints, more accepting and more able to accommodate others, yet at the same time they retained the ability to assert themselves.

Figure 3 shows the BEVI results of Scales 13 to 17 before (T1) and after (T2) the program, based on participant responses to questionnaires (obtained with participants' consent). The group was originally low in Religious Traditionalism (No. 13: highly religious; sees self/behavior/events as mediated by God/spiritual forces; one way to the "afterlife") as well as Gender Traditionalism (No. 14: men and women are built to be a certain way; prefers traditional/simple views of gender and gender roles). The same values were more or less retained after the program.
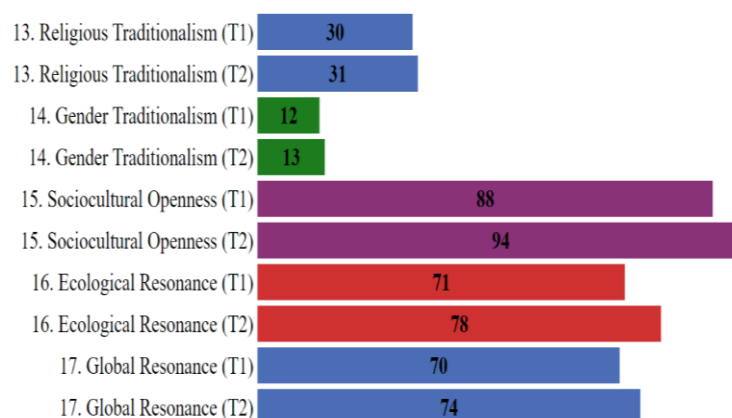
Figure 3. Program BEVI Results for Scales 13 to 17 (T1: Before, T2: After the Program)

Students' aggregate score for Sociocultural Openness (No. 15: progressive/open regarding a wide range of actions, policies, and practices in the areas of culture, economics, education, environment, gender/global relations, politics) was very high (88 percentile) as they started the program, which is in line with results for Basic Openness (71 in No. 5). The program

helped the participants to achieve even more openness to other cultures and social values. It is notable that Ecological Resonance (No. 16: deeply invested in environmental/sustainability issues; concerned about the fate of the earth/natural world) also improved significantly even though the group had high interests in their respective environments and SDGs. The score change in Global Resonance (No. 17: invested in learning about/encountering different individuals, groups, languages, cultures; seeks global engagement) also displayed a degree of improvement (74 percentile) after students joined the program, which suggests high global engagement among group members during the program.

Overall, it can be concluded that the group consisted of members who were highly open to others and interested in environmental and global engagement at the initial stage. BEVI results indicate that these tendencies were reinforced positively throughout the program and students grew more accepting of different cultures and viewpoints, all the while maintaining their own opinions and expressing them in a way that allowed for harmonious relationships with others.

Learning Feedback and Outcomes

Immediately after the closing ceremony, a post-activity evaluation survey on the Online Intensive Study Program using Google Forms was sent to all participants. Questionnaire data from a total of 14 respondents were collected anonymously. Participant responses regarding their overall experiences in the program using a five-point Likert scale indicated that they were very satisfied (57.1%) or satisfied (28.6%), with the remainder indicating no opinion. None of the participants indicated negative feelings about the program. The majority of students were also satisfied with their international collaborative learning experiences during the program with 71.4% of students rating the highest possible satisfaction score. According to participants, the most popular activities/ lectures were those that included a 'real life' component, such as the virtual ecological campus tour and their dialogue with Okinawan high school students, which featured viewing and dancing traditional Okinawan dances. One Japanese student's reflection on that event was particularly inspiring, and said that dancing in front of the screen and sharing the moment with everyone made them feel that "the world became united".

As administrative facilitators, we learned that the key to a successful student exchange program was planning the best time for both universities. We held the Online Intensive Study Program during the spring recess for both universities in order to have both outbound and inbound program students experience collaborative learning, even if they were all virtual. Virtual student exchange programs are often considered as alternatives to the "real" programs in which students can immerse themselves in a target culture and experience culture shocks, thereby learning different perspectives through lived experiences. Although we do not argue this point, the program facilitators found that student satisfaction regarding online program activities could be assured by having spontaneous activities that replicate 'real life' experiences in an online format.

Reflections About Implementation

OISP 2020-21 focused on deepening relationships of collaboration and understanding between students of different cultures. Managing intragroup dynamics was a key area of concern, with attention paid to complementing participants' differing levels of English proficiency. Each group had largely the same ratio of international to Japanese student allocation, and program instructors and administrators were careful to pair Japanese students with less experience in speaking and using English with those who were more comfortable in the language. In addition,

students were assigned to different sessional groups each day of the program so they had equal opportunity to interact with other participants. Care was also given to observance of group dynamics, with attention being paid to personality traits and differences.

By midway through the program, students began to make their own efforts toward overcoming differences in language and proficiency levels. International participants were actively using online tools such as Google Translate and trying to express themselves in Japanese to better communicate and understand their Japanese peers.

Students were allocated a total of three hours of class time during the program to work on their group presentations, and were required to set aside time from their private schedules to work collectively on completing preparations for the final presentations. The high degree of intercultural understanding that had been established throughout the program was useful in helping participants cooperate to overcome differences in time zones and individual commitments. This may be attributed to a set of clear instructions on program assignments and consistent goal setting. Program instructors were careful to observe group breakout sessions to offer assistance and advice to students who encountered difficulties, while also giving each group time to work and interact on their own. These measures helped to improve intragroup communication and eventually generated high learner satisfaction and better learning outcomes for the program.

Concluding Remarks

Insights from these two COIL exchanges are not necessarily replicable given the limited sample size of each of these exchanges. Nevertheless, several things might be helpful for anyone planning similar ventures. Single asynchronous COIL exchanges are less conducive to peer evaluation formats. Both exchanges were highly favoured by all students involved. Online intensive study programs such as the University of the Ryukyus' OISP 2020-2021 can contribute in a short term to intrapersonal development and may be measurable by indices such as BEVI. In any case, establishing means of assessing international exchanges is recommended. Lastly, careful planning and consultation between faculty and staff can augment the quality of any exchange.

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A Language-Aware Virtual Exchange: Exploring the Intersection of Translanguaging Theory, Anti-Racist Pedagogy, and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

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How do Virtual Exchange partners and students decide which language or languages to use? What are our beliefs and attitudes towards these languages, and towards how we and our students acquire them or move between them? How do we regard our own linguistic skills? Ideologically, do we unpack the complex connections between named, hegemonic languages and identity positions, or explicitly address the impact of unequal status between languages and language variations on communication between faculty or between students? Even as we offer our students new experiences through virtual exchange, which messages are we sending about language, especially the continuing impact of English hegemony and the power structures it enables?

For three years, the presenter has co-led a professional development seminar called Language Across the Curriculum (LAC) that offers a cross-disciplinary, theoretically grounded approach to language diversity as part of LaGuardia Community College's focus on Inclusive Pedagogies. LAC draws from translanguaging theory and anti-racist pedagogy to guide faculty in a reflection on their language histories, an examination of language beliefs and stigmas, and a discussion of recent research on how to accelerate learning.

Interested to see how LAC and COIL could intersect, the presenter co-led a brainstorming workshop for the New York COIL community in March 2021 which raised the issue of how we might move from a "language blind" to a "language aware" approach and engage our students' language resources, no matter the nature of the virtual exchange.

Building on this work, the IVEC presentation first raises the question of language loss through a futuristic short fiction titled "Speech Sounds" by American writer Octavia Butler (*Bloodchild and Other Stories*, 1995) imagining how humanity might cope without the tool of linguistic communication. Underscoring the fact that many people have already experienced language loss through slavery, racist educational systems, and migration, this introduction leads to a discussion of LAC in the context of a college-wide social and cultural equity initiative. Connecting translanguaging theory (Canagarajah, 2011; Vogel and García, 2017) with anti-racist pedagogy (Delpit, 1988; Inoue, 2019; Baker-Bell, 2020), the presenter sketches out a change in how we conceptualize the language students arrive with – from an external, prescriptive, siloed, often monolingual paradigm which serves and maintains elite, and often colonial or neo-colonial power structures, and places students in a competitive and self-censoring context, to an internal, descriptive, translanguaging, multilingual model that aims towards awareness, inclusivity and equity between students and faculty. To demonstrate how this approach can be applied in VE, the presenter introduces a Language Feeling Exercise and a course template "Lost and Found in Translation" which provide cohorts with informal and formal opportunities to unpack linguistic histories, biases, and skills. The presentation ends with tips on initiating a language-aware VE: to slow down, to reflect between partners and share language stories and contexts, to open a mutual

co-creation space for a multilingual COIL experience, and to acknowledge diversity in linguistic resources with the conscious goal of promoting language equity.

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Innovation in the integral management of solid waste to promote the virtual exchange between Engineering courses from Mexico and Brazil

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The virtual exchange has become an opportunity to promote a multicultural learning environment by connecting university classes from different countries. The objective of this research was to present the approaches developed during a virtual exchange between two engineering undergraduate courses from Mexico and Brazil. The virtual exchange was developed in the disciplines Regulatory and Environmental Certifications of Sustainable Innovation and Energy Engineering from University of Monterrey (UDEM), in Monterrey, Mexico; and Environmental Management of Environmental Engineering from the São Paulo State University (Unesp), in Sorocaba, Brazil. We applied a five-step sequence to develop a virtual exchange between two engineering courses with different educational and cultural characteristics. The first step was weekly meetings of the professors from both disciplines. In these meetings, the primary strategies were outlined to promote cultural exchange between the students from both countries. Thus, "Innovation systems for the integral management of urban solid waste in Latin America" was chosen as the general theme through case studies in the cities of Monterrey and Sorocaba. The second step was to start communication between students from Brazil and Mexico using the Padlet application, when they inserted information, in Portuguese and Spanish, related to pastimes, favorite activities, personal tastes, email address and Instagram, allowing a prior presentation to the first meeting to break the ice. The third step was meeting to break the ice. An initial meeting was held to introduce the students and discuss cultural aspects of the countries and both cities (Sorocaba and Monterrey) and the main characteristics of municipal solid waste management. The fourth step was the division of groups and tasks. Four teams of seven students each, from Unesp and Udem, developed the following topics: popular collection of solid waste and possible innovations for improvement; proposals for improvement for the municipal solid waste treatment systems in Latin America; proposals for innovation systems in transport and digitization in the collection of municipal solid waste; and a proposal for the design and innovation of public policies on solid waste in Latin America. The fifth step was the presentation of the works developed by the students. The seminars brought technological solutions for the integral management of solid waste in Sorocaba and Monterrey cities, considering important cultural and social aspects, such as the Cooperatives of waste-pickers, an important social actor in Brazilian waste management. The strategies adopted in this research allowed the students involved to have an essential experience of working in an international team, promoting dialogue, and considering the multicultural dimension involved.

Key words: innovation, environmental management, education

Teacher Education and COIL: Outcomes from Our German-American Endeavor

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Abstract

For this Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) project, education students in Charlotte, North Carolina, in the U. S., partnered with students in Ludwigsburg, Baden Württemberg, Germany. The COIL Project, titled *Global Challenges: Here and There, Then and Now*, involved 15 German and 28 American students working in teams to identify a global challenge and create a multimedia presentation with perspectives from both countries (here and there) and compare and contrast the chosen challenge(s) from then (approximately 20 years ago) to now. This project is a part of a larger "Globally Networked Learning" initiative (UNC Charlotte) connecting faculty and students with peers at institutions around the world. Students had 7 weeks to collaboratively research their topic and create a multimedia presentation. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) for this COIL project were positioned within the Asia Society's four domains of global competence and three other SLOs for global education were added: Explain global interconnectedness of place and people; Engage with cultural similarities and differences; and critically reflect on one's own cultural situatedness.

As part of the problem-based and project-oriented work, students were asked to self-evaluate their dispositions, knowledge, and learning process during the entire project. They completed questionnaires, submitted written and oral feedback to their peers, and demonstrated their learning curve through a final portfolio. The portfolio content included written reflections as well as artifacts. The first part of the portfolio focused on three categories - *Group Work* (specifically, on the formation, process, and dynamics of the group), *Group Product* (specifically, the multimedia presentation itself, the process of creating the presentation, and content of the presentation), and the *COIL project* (specifically, intercultural learning and the overall project from beginning to end). The second part of the portfolio was the *Student Learning Outcomes Self-Assessment*. Using a chart, students were asked to self-reflect on their progress on the overall objectives of the COIL project. The third part of the portfolio was an analysis of *Students' Pre- to Post-Questionnaire* responses (Appendix B has a sampling of the questions). Students reflected on changes from pre to post regarding their intercultural learning and on the COIL project process.

The main benefits of our project can be grouped into two themes: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and Connection to Teaching. Within ICC the main categories where students felt they made gains were in language (especially for German students), broadening of perspectives (especially among the American students), and learning about oneself and others (for all students). Both groups of students stated the project helped them realize that

communicating within a language is more than just translating words. The project also helped them reflect on prejudices as well as to consider external views on their culture. Differences in academic cultures were evident to both sets of students. The American students wished for more guidelines regarding the project work, whereas the Germans felt the guidelines were too rigid and wanted more flexibility. As to teaching, both groups imagined carrying out a similar project with their future school students and would consider participating in another COIL project in the future.

Introduction

While due to the COVID19 pandemic student mobility came to an abrupt halt, it also provided an opportunity for virtual exchange. Opportunities for virtual exchange brought about questions regarding student learning objectives (SLOs). Questions such as: Can we use the SLOs developed for study abroad with virtual exchange? How might we capture student attainment of the learning outcomes in a virtual exchange? While our COIL project was created as a way to continue internationalization efforts it also afforded the opportunity to explore these and related questions. We present here how a COIL project allowed for measurement of student learning outcomes and how students demonstrated the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, and value intended as per the SLOs.

For this COIL Project, three UNC Charlotte SLOs for global education (noted with an asterisk) were positioned within the framework of the four domains of global competence set form by the Asia Society (2018). This COIL project aimed for student to be able to:

Investigate the world
- Develop knowledge and skills to investigate our world past, present, and future
- Explain global interconnectedness of place and people *

Recognize Perspectives
- Recognize, understand and accept their own and others' perspectives
- Engage with cultural similarities and differences *
- Critically reflect on one's own cultural situatedness *

Communicate ideas
- Communicate with diverse audiences
- Exhibit communicative skills and media competence

Take Action
- Work on becoming agents of change

Process

Students working in teams with both German and American students, were asked to identify a global challenge and create a multimedia presentation with perspectives from both countries (here and there) and compare and contrast the chosen challenge(s) from then (approximately 20 years ago) to now. Students had 7 weeks to collaboratively research their topic and create a multimedia presentation. First, we met in separate classes. Both the Germans and the Americans engaged with the concept of COIL through the SUNY COIL Center (n.d.) website as well as the concept of intercultural learning by completing modules on culture mapping and on how to use the DAE (describe, analyze, and evaluation) reflection model. They also collected possible global challenges of the last 50 years. The students identified topics that would interest them. The professors used this information to form the groups, making sure each

group had representation from both classes. After an initial getting-to-know-each-other task, further meetings followed, which were determined independently by the students. Here, the groups were to become clear about a topic and consider which presentation method would be suitable. In the following weeks, the groups worked mostly independently. They did research, met in their groups to discuss how to proceed, and planned and created their final product for presentation. During these weeks groups were required to attend "milestone meetings" with both professors. In these milestone meetings, the selected topics were discussed, clarified or partially modified. The students were shown alternative presentation options or alternative research possibilities. The final mini-conference, during the Saturday of the last week, marked the end of the product-oriented part of the project. In the conference, which lasted more than four hours and was open to the public, the groups' pre-recorded presentations were presented and discussed. Students peer evaluated another group and self-evaluated their own group's presentation. In addition, they completed their portfolios and reflected on their learning. The portfolio content included written reflections as well as artifacts. The first part of the portfolio focused on three categories - *Group Work* (specifically, on the formation, process, and dynamics of the group), *Group Product* (specifically, the multimedia presentation itself, the process of creating the presentation, and content of the presentation), and the *COIL project* (specifically, intercultural learning and the overall project from beginning to end). The second part of the portfolio was the *Student Learning Outcomes Self-Assessment*. Using a chart, students were asked to self-reflect on their progress on the overall objectives of the COIL project. They were asked to indicate at what level they felt they met the objectives and to determine if they felt their level indicated growth. Then, students were asked to elaborate through a written reflection. The third part of the portfolio was an analysis of *Students' Pre- to Post-Questionnaire* responses. Students reflected on changes from pre to post regarding their intercultural learning and on the COIL project process.

Topics Presented
The following are a representation of the topics presented:
- The Rise of Political and Social Extremism and Terrorism in the US and Europe within the Last 30 Years
- Right-wing Extremism
- The Racist Language Usage in Society Against African Americans from the 1950's to 2000's
- A Brief Look into the History of German Immigration to the US
- Illegal Immigration in Germany and the United States: Immigration Laws and Regulations
- Refugees and Higher Education: United States and Turkey
- Global Family Planning Perspectives: Exploring Family Planning in Germany and the United States
- Plastic Usage

Methods
Human subject research permission was granted through the Institutional Review Board. Data was not analyzed until after the semester had ended and grades had been submitted. The data was qualitatively analyzed using a constant comparison method (Strauss & Corbin 1998). NVivo (QSR International 1999-2019), a qualitative analysis software program, was used for data management and organization. Codes were categorized and themed. The findings presented

from the portfolio and self-reflection data are supported by direct quotes where applicable. Data from both German and American students are presented.

Findings

The main benefits of our project, as the data shows, can be grouped within two main categories: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and Connection to Teaching, as all of the students are or are studying to become teachers. Within the ICC the main aspects that showed a development among the students were the language (especially for German students), differences in the academic culture, a broadening of perspectives (especially among the American students) and the learning about oneself and others.

Intercultural Communicative Competence

Language

At the time of the COIL project, America was in turmoil sparked by the killing of George Floyd and other persistent racial injustices. The topic of race was discussed within the groups and was the focus of a couple of presentations. Additionally, the interaction students had throughout the COIL project seemed to bridge the theory to reality gap. A German student noted: *"While I have previously been aware of this fact, in theory, I couldn't have given a specific example or explained it any further. Especially understanding the different connotations of "race" and "Rasse", made me realize the different relationship one might have to a word depending on where one is from."* This student recognized the connections between language and perspective.

Academic Culture

A few American students understood *"this project was a hands-on, open, creative learning experience"* and felt *"it was a learning experience of value."* Some students recognized the freedom and creativity they had. On the other hand, some students found the open-endedness frustrating and they wanted more guidance. Another student said, *"I think this project went very well despite having creative range to do whatever we saw fit."* The fact that the American students struggled with the different academic expectations and experienced differences in teaching and learning methods is precisely the intercultural value of a COIL project.

The German students also discovered the differences in the academic culture or as one German student put it: "*While the definition of a goal was usually enough for me and my fellow German students to start the work process, the American students were always anxious to ask for the complete procedure, step by step."* For the German students, used to project-oriented work, sticking to prescribed steps felt, in some cases, obstructive for the work process.

Broadening Perspectives

For many American students, the COIL project highlighted the connection between local and global. The project broadened their perception of *"what it means to be a global citizen"* and reinforced the value of local citizens being informed of current affairs. Several students noted that they were paying more attention to current events while participating in a COIL project. For example, one student wrote, *"I wasn't spending enough time paying attention to current events, but now I recognize that they are important, and I need to be more conscious in my decisions to watch the news and read magazines dealing with current events."* Students noted the value of the COIL project with relationship to intercultural competence and the importance of differing points

of view. *"It has been eye opening to see how much you can learn not being so stuck in your own little bubble."*

Similar aspects were named by the German students: One students mentioned that the topic of the project made clear to all group members how privileged they are. And they also drew personal conclusions from the project, as one student said she recognized that she should be more open to understand other perspectives on one topic: *"I had to reflect on myself, my thinking and my behavior and came to realize, that I have to be more open and freer of prejudice the next time I'm confronted with people form a different cultural background."*

Learning about Oneself and Others

Nearly all the students mentioned that they learnt a lot about themselves and about others. By being confronted with foreign prejudices they reflected on their own culture. And by being confronted with *"real"* people from the other culture they reflected on their own stereotypes they have had so far. So one American student said, *"Working with another culture helped me to better see and understand the viewpoints I hold and why I have them."* And a German student mentioned: *"With each meeting I got to reflect on my own culture and on what I knew about the US culture. Hearing what our American friends thought about Germany and our culture provided me with an outside view, that I had never considered before."*

Connection to Teaching

Many American students were thinking about integrating the project within their normal lessons. Although some mentioned problems, like the age of children in kindergarten or elementary school, they were open to trying such a project also with them. They also formulated ideas how topics could be simplified or maybe the duration of the project could be shortened. One American student put it this way: *"I think it would be cool to incorporate the COIL project into my classroom. I would have to simplify the topics, so it would be appropriate for an elementary school classroom."*

For German students it was also an idea for the future to incorporate such a project in schools. One German student wrote, *"It is possible that I will design such an activity for my future pupils. Everyone can benefit from intercultural exchange, especially young people who are really curious to get to know other languages, countries and cultures."*

On average, students felt the COIL project helped them grow and develop in the area of recognizing, understanding, and accepting their own and others' perspectives. University students would benefit from virtual exchanges like a COIL project. At the end of our COIL project, students indicated they would appreciate other similar opportunities:

- *"If such a project were offered again as part of my studies, I would definitely participate again!"*
- *"I would love to participate in another COIL project like this or even be a mentor for another group participating in a COIL project."*

Overall, the COIL project allowed for measurement of SLOs and students demonstrated the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, and value intended as per the SLOs. The COIL project also supported development of ICC and opportunity for changes in perspectives.

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Beyond Queer Theory: Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Community Service Learning through Transatlantic Exchange

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This paper reports on the pedagogical considerations and teaching experiences that emerged from the co-taught remote course on Queer Theory between the Research and Teaching Area Sociology of Gender at the Bielefeld University and the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Alberta. The virtual environment and need for connecting exclusively online brought about by COVID-19 facilitated a new and exciting transatlantic collaboration, which allowed for the creation of a course that pursued a twofold objective: foster cross-cultural dialogue and exchange among the students from the two partner universities as well as provide students with practical experiences through project-based work with Edmonton-based community partners that can be completed in an online setting. While the former enabled students to discuss theoretical readings so that they can develop an understanding of how normative ideas around identities and bodies have impacted the construction of social hierarchies and shaped an unequal distribution of power in different geographical, socio-cultural, and historical contexts, the latter encouraged students to translate theory to practice and apply queering as methodology in an investigative project with a community partner. This form of engagement and exchange was particularly valuable for all participants and instructors for the purpose of enhancing the project of internationalization at the respective home institutions and ensured that all participants are exposed to a variety of approaches and ideas that expanded their understanding of how to engage with academic scholarship and activism beyond their own academic training and framework.

Getting started "on a shoestring": Institutionalizing virtual exchange with minimal financial investment

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The events of 2020 have brought tremendous changes in education for students and faculty alike. Now, more than ever, we need virtual exchange programs to provide international experiences for our students and faculty. In this panel we presented best practices and successful strategies for the implementation and support of virtual exchange programs, as well as initiatives for faculty engagement. Strong faculty engagement and institutional support, especially during these financially challenging times, require out-of-the box strategies and support services to embrace and strengthen the virtual exchange faculty communities within the institutions of higher education.

St. John's University had to become resourceful and creative to engage faculty while advocating for them to the upper administration. The ultimate goals were to give incentives to faculty such as financial rewards or promotion/merit and to aim for the inclusion of virtual exchange in the internationalization strategies of the institution, but lack of financial support did not discourage them from launching virtual exchange initiatives. Steps to start and increase virtual exchange visibility were twofold. First, they began within the institution by mentoring faculty to engage in this new initiative while advocating to the administration to support the faculty. Supporting faculty consisted of speaking about the value of virtual exchange for teaching and research, locating partners, and assisting with course design. The advocacy work with the upper administration included the articulation of the various ways this initiative contributes to sustainable internationalization by bringing successful examples of VE from other institutions. Second, they reached out to national and international networks outside of the institution for support with resources and mentoring for the new virtual exchange administrators.

At Shenandoah University, to motivate faculty participation and make virtual exchange more visible within the institution, they created a listserve to reach out to faculty; nominate faculty for teaching awards; launched a YouTube channel to share virtual exchange experiences; and have COIL alumni come back as workshop instructors. These are cost effective ways to sustain and maintain COIL at the institution with minimal financial investment.

In addition to making virtual exchange part of an institution's internationalization strategy, senior leadership could make public statements in support of virtual exchange. This helps to align existing institutional resources behind virtual exchange efforts. To encourage faculty participation, institutions need to remove obstacles, reward innovation, recognize the workload, provide training, and connect faculty with experienced mentors. It is important to name someone responsible for promoting and coordinating virtual exchange at the institution.

Grounded on issues of equity and sustainability, this panel of new and experienced practitioners proposed practical approaches institutions could adopt to help close the gap of faculty and institutional support for virtual exchange projects.

Identifying and Eradicating Barriers in International Virtual Exchange that Keep Hypersegregated Youth Segregated

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Abstract:

The celebration of diversity is at the heart of global education initiatives. Yet, participation in study abroad and related programs in the United States – a purported "melting pot" of races and cultures – remains, disproportionately, the domain of affluent whites (NAFSA 2020; IIE 2020; Hallmark 2017; Faupel 2014).

In recent years, international virtual exchange (IVE) – an educational experience involving interaction between geographically-separated participants using technology and trained facilitators – has emerged, among other things, as an affordable and scalable alternative or supplement to study abroad. In the wake of this emergence there has been IVE research on everything from facilitator training and global career prep to power imbalances and peace building.

One area that rarely has been explored, is the potential for IVE to give isolated and underserved students in the United States a study abroad experiences with peers in other countries and, in the process, expose them to all that the global world has to offer.

This paper – originally presented at IVEC 2021 – presents an overview of a Ph.D. dissertation study that seeks to understand how the life experiences of students from hypersegregated backgrounds who participate in international virtual exchange affect their interest in international travel, study abroad, language studies and global careers. To accomplish this, the study applies a mixed methodology using surveys and semi-structured interviews to learn from recent IVE participants at two very diverse institutions of higher education: Georgia State University (GSU) in Atlanta and Florida International University (FIU) in Miami.

Key Words: international virtual exchange, study abroad, hypersegregation, diversity, inclusion, underrepresented students, BIPOC students

Background and Study Aims:

The term *hypersegregation* was coined in the late 1970s by University of Chicago sociologists Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton who defined segregation along five dimensions -- unevenness, isolation, clustering, concentration and centralization – and determined that ethnic groups with high scores on several of the dimensions tend to be hypersegregated.

The research for this study is underpinned by landmark communication and social psychology theories on contact (Allport 1954), dialogue (Freire 2018; Badkin 1994; Bohm 1996) and identity (Abram & Hogg 1990; Tajfel 1974). It is informed by decades of sociological research on *hypersegregation* (Massey & Denton 1993) and *residential apartheid* (Grigsby et al. 1994). Numerous case studies and commentary by scholars such as Ibram X. Kendi, Immanuel Wallerstein, Mala Bali and Paul Gorski also have influenced the study's focus.

Figure 1.

Race/Ethnicity	U.S. Postsecondary Enrollment 2018-2019	U.S. Students Abroad 2018-2019
African American or Black	13.4%	6.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.3%	8.9%
Caucasian	55.2%	68.7%
Hispanic/Latino American	19.5%	10.9%
Multiracial	3.9%	4.7%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.7%	0.4%

Note. Ethnic makeup of U.S. postsecondary enrollment and study abroad. Trends in U.S. Study Abroad. NAFSA 2020.

Recognizing long-existing barriers to greater diversity, equity and inclusion in study abroad (Fig. A), this study is inspired by a multi-pronged research blueprint developed by the researcher for achieving greater equity in U.S. global citizenship development. This research paradigm – which has informed this study's research questions, literature review, theoretical underpinnings and methodology – seeks to recognize and explore the 1) specific IVE experiences of hypersegregated BIPOC students 2) barriers to and solutions for getting more students from hypersegregated backgrounds to the IVE starting line and 3) overarching benefits of increasing the participation of underrepresented groups from the United States in IVE. The key research questions guiding this inquiry into IVE are as follows:

RQ1: How does growing up in hypersegregated settings in the U.S. affect a student's knowledge about and perception of international exchange and travel?

RQ2: Does participation in an international virtual exchange (IVE) influence interest in international travel and intercultural competence development in students from hypersegregated backgrounds?

RQ3: Do African American, Latinx and other students of color believe U.S. international education initiatives target and serve White students more than students from BIPOC backgrounds?

Method and Data Collection Status:

1. **Survey**

The target population of participants for this survey are U.S. college students who have completed an international virtual exchange in the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 academic year. At the time of this paper's submission, the researcher had received 12 participant responses to two recruitment emails with a link to an optional survey distributed to the 23 GSU faculty who have included an IVE in their course since the fall of 2019, according to records from the GSU Office of International Initiatives. In late November, the FIU Office of Collaborative Online International Learning will send a similar email to their IVE faculty. The researcher is also

seeking approval from the International Virtual Exchange Conference and UNICollaboration to recruit additional IVE students.

2. **Pilot Interview, Main Interview**

After the survey data is collected, the researcher will send out a second email inviting all qualified survey respondents to participate in a 45-60-minute one-on-one online interview about their exchange experience. It also will provide a link to a Doodle schedule where students can reserve times for interviews.

The researcher will seek to interview two populations. The first group of students will be those who come closest to having had a hypersegregated upbringing. These will be students who responded in the survey that:

1. They have "never traveled outside my country."
2. They have never participated in a study abroad program.
3. The neighborhood(s) they "grew up in before going to college" was "homogenous" where they shared "the same racial or ethnic background with 90 percent of other residents."
4. The racial and ethnic diversity they experienced -- in school, place of worship and part-time jobs -- before going to college was "homogeneous" where the respondent shared "the same racial or ethnic background with 90 percent or more of the other residents."

The second group will be students who do not fit the above description to allow for a control group. Most of the questions will be open-ended and designed to elicit experiences, stories, concerns and perspectives.

Interview data will be collected from mid-January through the end of February. All interviews will be scheduled on a Doodle application at a time convenient for the students. The interview guide will include juxtaposed lines of the questions and the line of thinking behind them.

Study Goals and Next Steps:

The findings of this study will provide new knowledge that will assist school districts, foreign language education groups, independent virtual exchange organizations and federal government peace-building initiatives in the goal of increasing the participation of underrepresented populations in IVE.

Upon completion of the dissertation for this study, the researcher will continue to work in this area and use the findings as a foundation for future research on increasing the participation of African Americans and underrepresented U.S.-based groups in IVE. In February 2022, the researcher will submit an approved paper for publication in a special fall 2022 edition *Journal of International Students* focusing on virtual exchange. The researcher also plans to submit proposals to present the findings to the 2022 International Virtual Exchange Conference and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), where she is currently a dissertation-year fellow.

Information obtained from the study also would assist the Atlanta Global Studies Center in expanding its current virtual exchange initiatives or in establishing partnerships with the Atlanta Public Schools (APS), Atlanta-area charter schools, the Stevens Initiative or the Shared Studios global conversations portals company, where the researcher has established relationships and past collaborations.

Lastly, consulting and collaboration opportunities include local, regional and national organizations that have established goals to increase cultural competence and better serve underrepresented populations. Among these groups are the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) World

Language and International Baccalaureate programs, the Georgia Foreign Language Conference, the Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG), the Office of Global Citizenship at the Association of American Colleges & Universities, and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

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Global Citizenship Education and Decoloniality of Knowledge: a virtual exchange between the US and Brazil in the COVID Era

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Disruptions brought to international education by the COVID pandemic have highlighted the urgency to strengthen Global Citizenship Education (GCE) within higher education and virtual exchanges (Estelles and Fischman 2020; O'Dowd 2020). This reinforcement will enable students to "critique the world they live in, see problems and issues from a range of perspectives and take actions to address them" (Leask 2015, p. 17). However, given the contextual constraints, this attempt to strengthen may turn into a weakness without the theory of decoloniality (Menon *et al.* 2021) to problematize dichotomous thinking to look at these issues.

In March 2020, while preparing another edition of the existing virtual exchange or Global Learning Experience (GLE) program between DePaul University (USA) and Unichristus (Brazil), the two responsible professors readjusted the syllabus from teaching English for academic purposes to Global Englishes and social, racial, and environmental justice issues from global perspectives. The rationale was to dissect "global citizenship" and "coloniality of knowledge" in the light of political polarization and the unleashed vulnerability of the globalized world revealed through the COVID-19 outbreak. In the adjusted co-curricular sequence, the professors prioritized dialogue and collaboration on issues of intersectionality of identities, Englishes, racial and social justice. Moreover, offering students who were under shelter-at-home orders the possibility of maintaining a virtual dialogue across cultures that might provide psychological shelter suddenly became a main concern.

This research empirically shows how a "critical approach" to virtual exchanges (Helm 2017) was implemented into the existing GLE course as a response to the new normalcy. In addition to discussions on students' realities in COVID times, the course heavily relied on concepts of intersectionality of identities and social justice. The most recent (2021) edition of the GLE also enhanced students' skills to interrogate a US-centered conceptualization of globalization, knowledge, wealth, and language. The pre- and post-survey results taken by the 2021 cohort (N=26) indicate that the GLE course contributed to students' awareness of English as a language capital, and their responsibilities as global citizens. It has also increased students' appraisal of cultural differences and respect for other cultures or, as one participant put it succinctly: "The course has diminished my impulse to essentialize people from cultures other than my own."

Tangible results in terms of GCE are the final course project proposals on calls for action in response to social, racial, and environmental justice issues that exist both in Brazil and the U.S. developed collaboratively by the participants of the 2021 cohort. Ultimately, the analysis of final presentations and survey results empirically proves that the co-curricular adjustments made in 2020 provoked curiosity, creativity, ability to analyze, compare and exchange on global issues, empathy, responsibility, and ability to develop locally adapted solutions to global issues. Overall, the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic under which this GLE course occurred in 2020 and 2021 helped shape students' sense of "global solidarity."

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Against all odds: Problem-solving as a skill critical to Virtual Exchange

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Abstract

Virtual Exchange (VE) brings together groups of learners from different geographical locations and cultural backgrounds to engage them in online intercultural collaboration and interaction. Although VE projects are designed and implemented by educators as part of the students' educational programmes, they often go beyond the setting of traditional courses offered by higher education institutions. Because of their innovative nature, VEs require the students to leave their comfort zone and think outside the box to develop new creative strategies of communication and collaboration in order to find solutions to problems that crop up in this new learning environment.

This presentation showcases the problem-solving strategies employed by the students of Creative Business (the Netherlands), Tourism (Poland) and Language Studies (Finland) who were engaged in two interdisciplinary VE projects carried out in the times of Covid-19 pandemic in spring 2020 and 2021, **City break in Europe**: Understanding tourists' needs and motivations and **City exploration**: Emerging tourism trends in the Covid-19 era. During their six-week collaboration the Dutch, Polish, and Finnish students joined their forces and critically analysed the official websites of their municipalities (Utrecht, Poznań and Jyväskylä), focusing on the language, graphics, audience, marketing strategies and new attractive forms of sightseeing. As the final product, the students collaboratively designed an innovative tour of the three cities.

To reach their project goals, the students, confronted with multiple collaborative hurdles and stuck in the Covid-19 pandemic, were forced to find effective ways of dealing with the physical distance, cultural differences, varying language levels, foreign accents, disciplinary gaps, malfunctioning technology and various security measures imposed in their countries to prevent the spread of the disease. Most studies addressing the challenges of VE offer tips and recommendations for teachers on how to improve the pedagogical design of the projects. Challenges are interpreted as problems that should be minimized to make the VE experience smooth for the students. In our study, we suggest that problems are affordances or even benefits because they provide a learning experience for the participants of VE.

Introduction

Virtual Exchange (VE) can be a challenging experience for the participants. Previous studies pointed out the difficulties of working in virtual teams due to the lack of face-to-face meetings (Morrison-Smith & Ruiz 2020). When communication and collaboration are limited to online platforms, the group members can find it difficult to plan, negotiate, and create something

together. Moreover, the lack of shared grounding such as group history, common experiences, and shared norms can also make collaboration problematic, as suggested by Maynad and Gilson (2014). In many cases, the participants use a foreign language (usually English) as a lingua franca, which can generate feelings of anxiety (Fondo & Jacobetty 2020), especially for those who are not fluent in the language. The diversity of socio-cultural backgrounds and digital skills can also cause challenges during the virtual exchange (Helm 2018 Hauck 2020).

In our study we focus on problem-solving as a critical skill in the context of online international collaboration. Our aim is to identify the kinds of problems students encounter in VE projects and to explore the solutions that the students themselves can offer.

The study draws on data collected from two virtual exchanges arranged among three universities in 2020 and 2021: Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland; Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands; and the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. The projects were based on group work in interdisciplinary (business, tourism and languages) and international teams. The main theme in both VE-s was city tourism. The participants had to compare their municipalities' websites, collect material in their own cities and prepare a multimodal product that advertises the three cities (Poznań, Utrecht, and Jyväskylä).

Our data comprised the students' e-portfolios that they had submitted at the end of each exchange. Data was collected with the informed consent of the participants. In total, we analysed 32 e-portfolios from the 2020 and 34 from the 2021 project. We used the method of thematic analysis (Braun & Clark 2006) to identify the main areas of problems that the students reported on in their writings. Our research questions were as follows:

1. What challenges did the students describe in their e-portfolios?
2. What strategies did the students apply to overcome the challenges?

We identified five main areas of challenges:
- Project management and task completion in a virtual setting;
- Communication across cultures in English as a lingua franca;
- Socializing online and collaborating with international partners;
- Use of technology for collaborative purposes;
- Impact of Covid-19.

The aspects that caused the greatest concern in the first area – that is in **project management and task completion** – were heavy workload, deadlines, varying schedules, time-zone differences and leading groups. From the start the students were required to think about how to make the tasks more manageable and how to share them in a fair way. They decided to contribute to the group effort by doing what they were best at and use the group's talents and skills most efficiently.

Many groups realized early on that they were unable to discuss all the details during their synchronous weekly meetings. They had to prepare in advance; time constraints also demanded efficiency. The faster the students coped with the duties, the more time they had for small talk and socializing. Working in shared online documents and completing tasks off-line were the most frequently adopted techniques.

To cope with time-zone differences and varying university schedules, the students decided to communicate clearly in writing and used Doodle-like applications, time-converters and online calendars. They helped them avoid ambiguities and misunderstandings. Some groups

sent funny emojis to remind their group members about the coming meetings. This way they avoided sounding dry and imposing.

Leading groups was a challenge for some of the first-time team leaders. Collaboration did not always go smoothly, and this was a cause of immense stress. What helped in those groups were direct feedback and shared documents drafted in advance where group leaders could write things down for everybody to read. Sometimes humor helped, or support given by a more experienced group member.

Using English as a lingua franca was another challenging area. The gap in language command caused a lot of tension, especially at the beginning of the VE. Less advanced students reported having a huge language barrier and were afraid to engage in conversations. On the other hand, the more advanced students were disappointed that they could not discuss things in depth.

What helped in many groups was creating a safe, friendly atmosphere. Since the Finnish students studied languages, some of them received solid pedagogical training. They used guiding questions, prolonged silence, and tried to reach out to the quiet members of their teams. In all the groups students experimented with adjusting their language, using synonyms, translation, definitions, transformations, paraphrasing, guessing, and translanguaging.

Apart from using linguistic techniques, the students resorted to various multimodal modes of communication (such as screen sharing, writing, using emoji, gifs and memes) in order to express ideas which were too complex to put into words. VE participants exploited technology and intensively explored various online tools, such as Google translate, e-dictionaries, photo-translators, and online tutors.

Socializing and online collaboration were the areas of particular anxiety, especially at the start of the VE project. The students tried to compensate for the lack of shared grounding by using various ice-breaking activities and humour. They thought of funny introductions, told jokes, chatted about everyday life, their hobbies and interests. They tried to build a sense of community.

During the first group meetings the students were encouraged by the teachers to establish group rules and design a group logo and name. Adopting a creative approach to these two tasks and using a sense of humor gave some groups a lot of fun and helped them build team spirit. Many groups spontaneously engaged in conversations about the three cultures and the Covid situation before jumping to the project tasks.

To make the students aware of stereotypical cultural perceptions, we asked them before the VE to design an intercultural survey and ask how much their local peers knew about the other three countries. They presented the findings in their international groups and had a chance to discuss the emerging stereotypes with their group members. This way they confronted the stereotypical perceptions of the three countries with the opinions held by the representatives of those nations. To overcome stereotypes in practice, the students made sure that everybody actively participated in the VE, followed the rules adopted by the team and contributed to the group effort equally.

To ensure commitment, the students used various online tools, such as Doodle, shared documents, immediate messaging systems, e.g. WhatsApp. They sent various reminders or directly addressed the disengaged teammates. Sometimes personal, one-to-one conversations were needed. The groups used reporting to teachers as the last resort. We strongly encouraged them to resolve conflicts directly in the team and offered advice on how to do it on Trello, which was our main online platform.

Use of technology was a considerable challenge before the pandemic, as many groups had not had enough experience in using online applications for group communication and collaboration. Some students found it stressful to present themselves entirely online while using a new tool (e.g. Trello). Installing and getting acquainted with new applications needed time and practice. Negotiating which tools and techniques to use was problematic in some groups, as there were conflicting preferences, so the students experimented with a few applications (such as Google meet, Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp) in order to adopt the most convenient one.

As always, the students tried to conserve energy, so at the start they tried to use the tools they had already known, particularly when producing the final product. Many groups chose Instagram – the medium they had used a lot for social purposes, but not for educational ones. Pressed for innovation, the students explored new, rarely used features of Instagram. They added sound, video, quizzes and developed educational stories.

They transferred skills from one tool to another. For example, those who knew Zoom were able to quickly adapt to Teams. This experience gave them a chance to compare various features of online applications and learn on the way how to best utilize them. The students spontaneously searched the net to find tutorials and discovered that they could do more than they initially believed they would be able to achieve.

To our immense joy, the students shared their expertise and helped one another by using screen sharing techniques, sending URL addresses to the best tutorials, or simply guiding their teammates online, with patience and empathy. All these challenges built trust, group reliance and empathy.

The most disturbing challenge was **the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic**. It wreaked havoc at universities in March and April 2020 when our students engaged in the VE project were supposed to go to town and record footage of city life. Suddenly strict sanitary regulations prevented them from doing it. So, they faced a huge challenge: how to do the project?

What we observed at that time was mutual support present in most of the groups. The students realized early on that they had to adopt an alternative approach – use photos and videos stored on their digital devices, share resources with their friends, search the net for material offered on free licenses. They had a quick lesson on copyrights, too.

Some groups completely changed the format of the final product. They communicated more intensively and often needed to renegotiate the initial workload division. This was a very intense time and required good negotiation skills combined with extended empathy.

The groups which went through this period successfully developed very strong bonds and kept communicating after the project ended. During our closing video-conference there was a sense of community, and some students even regretted the project was coming to an end.

The **comparison of the VE projects** of 2020 and 2021 resulted in some interesting aspects in the context of the five key themes identified, namely: 1) project management and task completion, 2) communication across cultures in English as a lingua franca, 3) online socializing and collaboration with international partners, 4) the use of technology for collaborative purposes, and 5) the impact of COVID-19. For the first three themes no significant differences emerged in the findings. As far as the use of technology and the impact of COVID-19 is concerned, some interesting differences emerged over the two-year period.

Firstly, there was a significant increase in both expertise and confidence as far as the use of media platforms and channels is concerned. The students were more adept at communicating with a diversity of media for different purposes, as outlined earlier in this paper. This can in part be attributed to the global lockdowns experienced with the rise of COVID-19. Furthermore, there

was a decrease in the level of anxiety and disruption in everyday life caused by the COVID pandemic. For many this has become part of daily life globally and served as a common discussion factor amongst the groups.

Overall, it can be concluded that both projects (2020 and 2021) were successful in terms of students overcoming challenges experienced during the projects. Aspects that contributed towards the successful solving of problems by students include amongst others:

- providing a solid foundation and framework (clear course structure, clear weekly instructions, regular feedback and reflection);
- effective communication spheres (platforms and channels to facilitate effective online communication);
- letting students cope with challenges and offering support where necessary;
- giving students ownership of the project and letting them identify and solve problems on their own;
- and finally letting them experience satisfaction and savor victory by participating in an online exhibition where they displayed their products and commented on those made by other teams.

Dealing with and finding solutions to problems are invaluable experiences as they can motivate students to mobilize their resources and rise to the challenge, make them think outside the box to remedy the situation, help them gain flexibility and improve their time management skills. Overcoming problems together leads to greater cultural sensitivity, develops students' negotiation skills and improves the ability to look at things from a different perspective. Success at problem solving can build perseverance. Therefore, it can be concluded that problems are not to be prevented at all costs. In many cases, students can find solutions themselves, which is a useful learning experience.

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Addressing Institutional Weaknesses through a COIL Partnership: A Case Study of Fully Integrated Semester-Long COIL Courses

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The Kansai Gaidai University (KGU) – University of Hawaii West Oahu (UHWO) COIL partnership brought together two strikingly different institutions for the purpose of virtual exchange/COIL. Forged before COVID-19, the partnership sought to build upon institutions' strengths to create the first online course for KGU and the only international exchange program for UHWO students. For Fall 2021, the partnership will be in its fourth semester and expanding to a new course.

Introduction to Institutions

KGU is a fully accredited private university located in Osaka, Japan with an enrollment of about 12,000 students. Its primary focus is foreign language and international studies, and it consistently ranks as one of the top universities in Japan for outbound study abroad and transfer students. KGU also hosts about 750 international students a year on its campus, most of which are enrolled in the Asian Studies Program (ASP) for semester- or year-long study abroad. ASP students are recruited from KGU's network of over 393 affiliated institutions across 55 countries and regions.

UHWO is 4-year public baccalaureate college of about 3,000 students located in Kapolei, HI. It is an indigenous- and minority-serving institution based in Native Hawaiian culture and values which champions diversity and underserved communities. It is known for its high level of diversity among faculty and students. UHWO also champions online instruction as a means to promote access to higher education for non-traditional students.

Despite the two institutions' strengths, both campuses were limited in their ability to promote virtual exchange. KGU lacked the online infrastructure and experience for virtual programs. Prior to COVID-19, faculty received no training or professional development in online pedagogy since campus policy prohibited online classes. Students' broadband access tended to be restricted to campus computer labs and personal internet access limited to smartphones or tablets. A 2015 COIL project with Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) was a unique exception to the campus' limited virtual programming, but it failed to gain traction for other online efforts.

UHWO's limitation was a lack of internationalization. Despite a 2016 effort to create an internationalization plan with the American Council on Education (ACE), the campus lacked a strategy for international recruitment or programming for students. There were no formal inbound or outbound study abroad programs, and previous efforts at forging international partnerships had been discontinued or delayed. UHWO also suffered from a lack of international diversity. There was no international recruiting efforts and the few international students on campus were long-term residents of Hawaii.

COIL Partnership

        KGU's first COIL attempt with ITESM in 2015 was a mid-semester project combining a KGU business marketing class with an ITESM engineering class. Although it did not result in further collaborations, it seeded the idea of COIL in the KGU faculty. UHWO's first step towards virtual exchange was a 2015 informal student survey on study abroad opportunities. It found that the university's non-traditional demographics of single-parents, elderly family caretakers, and working professionals were burdened by obligations which made study abroad unrealistic. Virtual exchange was proposed as an alternative to study abroad, but no tangible outcomes were achieved.

        The KGU-UHWO COIL partnership emerged during an informal discussion in the summer of 2019. Summer and sabbatical opportunities had allowed the two collaborating faculty to gain cross-campus teaching experiences, providing a strong foundation for collaboration. Both faculty members taught similar courses, and both were tenured professors with significant flexibility in scheduling and instructional design. The KGU faculty member was also a senior administrator of the ASP. He believed COIL would diversity KGU's selection of courses for inbound study abroad students and provide a low-risk opportunity for Japanese students to gain exposure to an international classroom. The UHWO faculty member proposed the collaboration as a cost-effective means to offer UHWO students an alternative option to traditional study abroad for non-traditional and working professional students. Administrators on both campuses allowed the COIL project to proceed on a voluntary basis.

COIL Course Description

        The first COIL course for the KGU-UHWO partnership was Global External Environment (GEE), a business UHWO business management course, for Spring 2020. It was selected due to its interdisciplinary and international focus. GEE had also been taught at KGU during Fall 2017 when the UHWO faculty member was a visiting professor at KGU. Ten UHWO students and eight KGU students met online once a week for 13 weeks using Zoom for 90-minute class sessions. Synchronous online sessions were used for lectures, small group activities, individual student presentations, group presentations, and review sessions for exams. Students were also required to watch weekly video lectures (YouTube) and were assigned readings from the course packet.

        Campus academic calendars were not perfectly aligned, so UHWO students had two online Zoom sessions prior to the COIL class. Sessions were used to familiarize students with course technology and expectations for the course. KGU students had one Zoom session prior to COIL as an introduction to the course and to prepare them for the virtual exchange. The original plan was for KGU students to be in the same on-campus classroom during all Zoom sessions, but the classroom Wi-Fi system was unable to accommodate eight simultaneous Zoom streams. After the first week, KGU students were allowed to login from any location.

        The KGU students were ASP and Japanese students from various majors of study. Two of the ASP students were from Colombia, while the other two were from Mexico and Morocco. The Japanese students were preparing for upcoming study abroad experiences. All UHWO students were business majors. At the time, UHWO policy required all students to be physically present in the state of Hawaii.

        COVID-19 brought unprecedented disruption to both campuses during the Spring 2020 semester, but the COIL partnership helped buffer some of the turmoil. By the second month of the semester, the COIL course was the only KGU class still in session and set the example for

the campus' emergency transition to online instruction. For UHWO, the COIL course continued uninterrupted and was one of the few classes not to change its curriculum or mode of delivery.

The second course for the KGU-UHWO partnership was Asian Economies, Business, and Consumers (AEBC), a cross-listed business, economics, and history course taught during Fall 2020. It was selected due to its interdisciplinary and international focus. 18 UHWO students and 13 KGU were enrolled with a similar schedule as the previous COIL course. No non-Japanese students from KGU were enrolled since all inbound study abroad programs in Japan were cancelled due to COVID-19 visa restrictions. Like the previous semester, the KGU students were from various majors and were preparing for upcoming study abroad experiences. However, the UHWO students were a mix of business and social science majors.

The KGU-UHWO partnership returned to GEE for SP 2021. 17 UHWO students and 11 KGU students were enrolled in the course. Japan's continuing student visa restrictions prevented inbound study abroad programs, so KGU transitioned to a virtual mobility program for online study abroad for international students. GEE was also taught in the online study abroad program with nine KGU students and three international students attending class from Turkey, Morocco, and Latvia.

All COIL courses included groupwork assignments mixing students from each campus. GEE classes required students to collaborate on three group presentations and peer evaluations of group members' short writing and short presentation assignments. AEBC students worked together on three group presentations and an in-class computer simulation from Harvard Business Publishing. Both courses also included interactive activities during Zoom sessions to encourage more exchange and dialogue across the campuses.

Course Evaluations and Assessments

All three classes were evaluated using each campuses' standard student course evaluations. KGU students also attended a COIL debrief session at the end of each semester to share their thoughts on the COIL experience. An assessment of intercultural development was planned for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, but campus administrators failed to properly process a grant received from a third-party organization.

Data from the UHWO course evaluations showed COIL courses scored lower than the instructor's non-COIL courses, but higher than the campus average (Appendix A). Qualitative feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with just one negative student response (Appendix B). Course evaluations for GEE were analyzed to evaluate teaching modalities by accessing data from previous semesters for the same instructor. There were no statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) across modalities (asynchronous online, in-person, and COIL) in terms of overall evaluation of the instructor, time spent by student on the course, or student learning.

Student course evaluations from KGU were less robust and lacked qualitative responses. A comparison of GEE and AEBC is summarized in Appendix C. Discussions with KGU students during the course debrief session indicated students appreciated the COIL experience. A surprising finding from those discussions was the value KGU students found in the diversity of UHWO students. Students' reactions to the national (US and Japan) and ethno-racial diversity of the classroom were expected by the instructors, but KGU students expressed an equal, if not greater, appreciation for the exposure to non-traditional students such as working professionals, single-parents, and second career students.

Recent Developments

Progress on virtual exchange since the initiation of the KGU-UHWO partnership has been strikingly different for each campus. Virtual exchange has become the new normal for KGU. A professional development day COIL seminar at KGU was well attended, and plans are set for a second COIL partnership with Elon University. Virtual mobility has temporarily replaced inbound study abroad programs for the ASP program, with about 300 international students enrolled in KGU online classes in Japanese language and Japanese studies each semester. Campus-wide the university moved from no online to completely online in less than a semester due to COVID-19. After the campus reopened to local students, KGU adopted a full hybrid option, allowing students the choice to attend in-person of live streamed broadcasts. Post-COVID, virtual exchange is expected to remain an important part of KGU.

Virtual exchange has not been embraced by UHWO. A professional development day COIL seminar at UHWO was sparsely attended, and a faculty member who received COIL training from ACE elected not to join the KGU-UHWO partnership. Proposals to fund future virtual exchange and to replace lost staff positions in the international program office using federal COVID relief funds was a rejected by administrators.

Conclusion

The partnership between KGU and UHWO was well-suited due to complementary strengths and weaknesses. UHWO was strong in online instruction and student diversity, but weak international programs. However, despite the ideal fit in institutional strengths and weaknesses, the speed through which the partnership came together can primarily be attributed to significant degree of instructional flexibility granted to the instructors and dual faculty-administrator role of the KGU instructor. Cross-campus teaching experiences for the two instructors prior to the COIL partnership also helped the process.

Students from both campuses expressed satisfaction with the COIL courses and appreciation for the internationalization opportunities. Analysis also suggests the COIL modality creates opportunities for intercultural exchanges without negatively impacting content learning. The partnership has allowed KGU to gain new competencies in online instruction, though COVID-19 clearly accelerated the learning curve for the campus. UHWO has yet to capitalize on the experience to strengthen their international programs. It will be important to monitor whether the two campuses continue their current trends in virtual exchange.

University of Hawaii – West Oahu Course Evaluation Survey Result

	COIL	Non-COIL	Campus
The instructor taught me methods of analysis for this field of study.	4.48	4.85	4.48
I would rate the overall effectiveness of the instructor: F=Inferior; D=Poor; C=Average; B=Good; A=Superior.	4.69	4.88	4.54
How much time did you spend during a typical week working on assignments, readings, chats, emails, etc. for this course?	2.60	2.96	2.66
I expect my grade for the course to be a/an:	4.08	4.31	4.33
I learned a good deal of factual material in this course.	4.55	4.83	4.53
I gained a good understanding of concepts/principles in this field.	4.49	4.76	4.46
The instructor makes good use of examples and illustrations.	4.76	4.84	4.46
The instructor stresses important points in lectures/discussions.	4.72	4.81	4.45
The instructor clearly stated at the beginning of the semester the objectives of the course and requirements.	4.60	4.88	4.59
The instructor acknowledges all questions insofar as possible.	4.71	4.89	4.55
The instructor was easy to talk with and available for consultation.	4.78	4.89	4.51
The instructor presented the course materials in a clear and organized way.	4.52	4.86	4.47
The amount of material covered in the course is reasonable.	4.54	4.70	4.44
Class assignments provided an effective aid for learning the subject matter.	4.62	4.76	4.50
The instructional materials (e.g., texts, handouts, etc.) were relevant to course objectives.	4.68	4.81	4.58

APPENDIX B
University of Hawaii – West Oahu Course Evaluation Survey Qualitative Feedback

My overall evaluation of this course is…				
	SP 2020	FA 2020	SP 2021	Total
Total Comments	7	12	9	28
COIL Comments	2	6	4	12
Negative COIL Comments	0	0	1	1

How did this course enhance your personal and/or professional development in your concentration/major?				
	SP 2020	FA 2020	SP 2021	Total
Total Comments	5	12	7	24
COIL Comments	0	2	1	3
Negative COIL Comments	0	0	0	0

Please list your suggestions for improving the course and/or the instructor's teaching style and methods.				
	SP 2020	FA 2020	SP 2021	Total
Total Comments	5	9	6	20
COIL Comments	0	1	0	1
Negative COIL Comments	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX C
Kansai Gaidai University Course Evaluation Survey

I participated actively in this class					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
325 (n = 6)	0	3	2	1	0
370 (n = 10)	4	3	2	1	0

This course has satisfied by intellectual interest and given motivation to study further?					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
325 (n = 6)	2	2	2	0	0
370 (n = 10)	4	3	2	0	1

This course has helped me to acquire new knowledge and skills					
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
325 (n = 6)	2	2	2	0	0
370 (n = 10)	6	4	0	0	0

Course evaluation learning across challenge, reading, and writing					
325 (n = 6)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Challenge	4	0	2	0	0
Reading	4	1	1	0	0
Writing	4	0	2	0	0

Course evaluation learning across challenge, reading, and writing					
370 (n = 10)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Challenge	5	4	1	0	0
Reading	5	4	1	0	0
Writing	5	1	2	2	0

International virtual team-based learning: the importance of cultural aspects and health assistance for an optimized populational treatment: "When Spain Met Brazil"

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As part of an internationalisation initiative and a desire to collaborate, Botucatu Medical School (Unesp), Brazil, and Universidad Cardenal Herrera (UCH) CEU, Spain, developed a collaborative online international learning (COIL) project, which involved 22 Unesp and 50-60 UCH-CEU second year medical students during eight weeks, from March to April 2020. The project focused on cultural exchange and discussion of health system aspects by analyzing the effects of health conditions of major impact in each country. This blended system combined independent in-class development and a fully online, synchronous learning environment with social media tools such as Facebook Live Chat, Google Chat, Zoom, Skype, and Whatsapp.

Students received a clinical case describing a typical presentation of systemic arterial hypertension, which included some sociocultural elements specific to each country. All students were divided into groups to discuss similarities and differences from their distinct sociocultural perspectives, followed by the preparation of a joint report, which was published as an e-book. According to the students' feedback, obtained via two questionnaires combining closed and open-ended questions, the most interesting aspects of the course were the possibility to find common points of view, to get to know the health system of other countries, and to find out that health systems and management are different but the problems affecting the populations are the same. Even in classes with a higher number of students, interaction and discussion was possible due to asynchronous communication between the students, showing that the COIL model is consistent and flexible for adjustment.

The virtual exchange based on team-based learning showed to be highly beneficial for students of both universities. The larger groups formed for discussion allowed more intense cultural exchange, favoring the development of leadership competencies in the international and interdisciplinary context, enhancing their awareness in global health.

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The Symbolism of Freedom

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Abstract

The COIL cultural and virtual experience between students from the University of Albany (SUNY) in New York (USA) and the Andrés Bello Catholic University (UCAB) in Caracas (Venezuela), provided a bridge for learning and allowed us to overcome limitations beyond the physical distance, it allowed us to share and compare our judgments and perspectives throughout the many stages of the collaboration. The assigned activities immediately highlighted our similarities and, even more, our differences, but this led us to redefine our beliefs and forced us to observe the world from a more globalized perspective. Nevertheless, as it is necessary (and even mandatory) to compare our reality with that of our peers, one particular value popped out: freedom, which would later become one of the three critical cultural aspects examined throughout this exchange experience. Undoubtedly, *we understood that freedom is the right that some must maintain, and others must build*, and, in the end, it is in the hands of all the youth to continue the endless quest for freedom, and make history along the way. In order to deepen these cultural asymmetries, we developed our own learning methodology, so we could seek the most efficient and accurate way to adapt ourselves to the different digital tools and possibilities that the connectivity of each country granted, which would later become a discussion topic. This adventure also allowed us to further deepen into a cultural analysis (centered in the connectivity limitations), in the reality posed in our "post-pandemic" world. As a conclusion of this experience, we understood that communication and interaction are essential processes in a virtual environment, since they establish affective relationships that promote the collective construction of knowledge, generating an ideal atmosphere to connect people with different realities.

Presentation

What is freedom? Have you ever stopped to think about what does it mean to «be free»? It is likely that you would immediately think of being able to go wherever you want to, maybe speak freely without someone attacking you for what you think or say. Well, it is indeed a part of being «free» to do all of that, but is it just that? Or is there something else?

Well, it truly is a complex question which we do not pretend to answer today, because we learned that «being free» is a very different concept for everyone. Perhaps you have your own definition of freedom which maybe you may not even be aware of, but either way there is something that makes you feel boundless. That makes you feel «**free**».

We are not who to tell you what that is, but rather to account our story, and how we realized how we are free, even though we live in a country where we are not.

It goes needless to say that Venezuela is going through one of the worst crises of the 21st century, *where **94.5%** of the population lives in poverty*. A country where the 9 of us are considered very fortunate just for having an internet connection, not to mention for being able to go to a university.

Nevertheless, life finds a way, and every single one of us has made our way through and faced many challenges, and that is one of the most beautiful things about COIL experiences, they force you to think out of the box in order to find solutions maybe even without your peers knowing of all the things that you have to go through to be in that Zoom meeting. Some of us didn't have electricity to charge our phones and had to invest the last percentage of battery to attend to the meeting, some had to connect from a long and endless line just to fill the gas tank of their car, and others had to do magic just to find a working network to connect our computers to the internet.

But turns out, the inconveniences were not exclusively to us in Venezuela, but derived also from the implications of doing an international collaboration.

We all know the United States for being "the land of the free", for being proud of their freedom, but yet, some of our peers didn't feel "free", and in contrast with us, they didn't have to deal with surviving on a salary of 8 US dollars per month, constant outages of electricity, the worst internet connection in the world, or a constant fear of dying on the street by the hand of a paramilitary, governmental agent or maybe by the hand of a simple thug. Some of them didn't feel "free". Why? Because some of them were victims of the system because of their skin color, or because of their cultural heritage. And some of them didn't feel free when they saw their neighbors or friends marching on the streets claiming their rights.

At first, we were not able to understand how they, living in the land of the free, could say that they were not free. But it actually was very simple; we could not understand them just as they could not understand what we are going through in the so-called "richest country of the world". We are all humans, and as such, we experience life in different ways.

We had to develop our own methodology to overcome all of these issues, and managed to get three different video collaborations where we compared our cultures through social media, our typical dishes, and our symbols of freedom. In the process, we managed to learn not only about each other, but also about ourselves. **We learned how to be free**.

"I want to participate in the project, but I don't think my English is good enough." How can virtual exchanges help our students gain confidence?

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In September 2020, six of my students participated in a Click virtual exchange project with Housatonic Community College in Connecticut. Our project was titled "Yes! Oui! Affaire Conclue/Done Deal!" and joined my English for Industrial Sales and Marketing course with a business course in the US. In French-American groups of four, students worked on developing a new product/service, from coming up with the idea, to drawing up a Business Model Canvas. Their project ended with each group giving a PowerPoint presentation on Zoom.

When teaching ESL in France, you are constantly faced with the students' fear of speaking, of not being good enough. Even after years of learning the language, students do not trust their ability to take part in a conversation. Virtual exchanges place the students in real-life situations in which they will have no choice but to communicate in English to get the work done. It is a great way to support their use of English in context while helping them gain confidence.

This "Student Voices" presentation gave both students and their teachers the opportunity to share their experience of the project. It was divided into three parts. First, as the teacher who led the project on the French side, I explained how the project was designed, including, its objectives, our expectations, and the challenges I faced to convince students to participate. In the second part, Abranis and Dylan, two of the participating students shared their experiences, their expectations, the difficulties they faced and what they gained from the project. In their own words, they emphasized how the project allowed them to face their fear of speaking English and how they realized that they were fully capable of exchanging ideas, defending viewpoints, and presenting complex projects in English. They explained how the project changed the way they approach speaking English. Finally, my colleague, Véronique Tibayrenc, business teacher, who supervised the project with me, testified of her own experience teaching a project in English. She explained how, at first, she had difficulties following the conversations we had with our American partners to prepare the project. She also had to force herself to speak English in front of the students as she feared she would be judged for her accent. In the end, she stressed the fact she also gained confidence thanks to the project.

Building a Virtual Exchange Network

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The American Higher Education Alliance (AHEA) is founded with the mission to drive equity in higher education between borders, institutions, and individuals by connecting the global community through collaboration and shared learning experiences.

To realize this mission AHEA partnered with Tower Education Technologies and developed three interconnected software applications, the first of its kind for international educators and the internationalization of institutions.

Called InspirED™, the suite of tools provide a seamless single-sign-on environment for professional networking, course design, teaching and learning, and administrative management. In tandem with building the InspirED technology, AHEA began an initiative called the *AHEA Faculty Fellows* in collaboration with ISEP (International Student Exchange Programs), CONAHEC (Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration), and a group of their member institutions. These individual faculty and staff helped AHEA start its professional community in the InspirED environment and to promote virtual exchange methods of internationalization among their institutional members.

The AHEA Faculty Fellows initiative is a training intervention in CollaboratED™ for promoting virtual exchange. CollaboratED is an international faculty engagement and collaboration platform, within the InspirED environment, and supports partnership matching and course planning for virtual exchange. Our project goal is a future state when virtual exchange in CollaboratED does not require training intervention, but in the current state, we believe:

- that scaffolding increases the frequency of virtual exchange collaborations
- that small modular the training touchpoints are an improvement
- that grouping faculty into cohorts for occasional synchronous meetings is motivational
- that most of the time and work during the training takes place between partners.

There are two elements of virtual exchange scaffolding that AHEA has added to InspirED. One is an asynchronous self-paced eLearning course called the *AHEA OnRamp to Virtual Exchange.* This is the only comprehensive eLearning course on virtual exchange in the field. AHEA also believes that there is no substitute for cooperative learning, developing rapport with a partner, creating new ideas during group-work, and project-based learning to develop and plan curriculum. The design of the 10 eLearning course modules is so that participants start these higher impact learning activities with an improved foundation of knowledge on virtual exchange. The second line of effort is a mentored partnership and teaching development training. This program has been done with two groups of faculty, in fall 2020 and spring 2021, and adheres to a version of the *Collaborative Online International Learning* (COIL) training model. The main efforts were introduction to virtual exchange content knowledge, the formation of rapport between partners, and project-based work for planning and developing instructional activities. The training goal is for novice faculty to be ready to teach their first virtual exchange collaborative course.

The AHEA presentation at the IVEC conference described the InspirED software and AHEA's virtual exchange programs for faculty training. Through partnerships with universities,

colleges, and other institutions AHEA contributes and promotes its innovative technology tools for the development of global citizens through internationalized education, lifelong learning, and universal credentialing.

Strategies for Implementing COIL at the Institutional Level: Protocols for Success

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The pandemic has changed the way educators teach and students learn because it has forced more university classes to be online. Kelsey Miller states, in an article for the *Northeastern University Graduate Programs Blog*, that

> Roughly 6.3 million students in the United States are now enrolled in at least one Online course, though that number is growing due to the flexibility and benefits of virtual learning. (2019, p. 1)

In this presentation, three institutions: Alamo Colleges District (U.S.), Universidad Veracruzana (Mexico), and SUNY Potsdam (U.S.), will share strategies for establishing and implementing virtual exchanges through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) at the institutional level. Presenters will share four overarching concepts in establishing virtual exchanges at their institutions. These concepts include: conquering institutional resistance, key strategies for building a foundation of support, clarifying the role and responsibilities of the COIL coordinator, and tips for helping early adopters remain engaged. These techniques appeal to junior and senior leadership based on the premise of keeping student academic and personal growth as a priority in international virtual education. Following this presentation, participants will: 1. Understand how to meet the resistance of starting a COIL program at their institution; 2. Identify ways to get involved in COIL on the administrative level; 3. Describe the best procedures for implementing COIL at their institution. In this way, the presenters will outline a plan for successful COIL implementation, regardless of the type and size of a college or university.

These strategies will be discussed as follows:
Sharmain van Blommestein, PhD, SUNY Potsdam
Beginning Phase:
- Getting Involved
- Meeting the Resistance
- Establishing Best Practices

LaTanya Kurney and Mariela Cadena, Alamo Colleges District
Implementation Phase:
- Building a Foundation for Institutional Support
- Establishing Best Practices

Verónica Rodriguez Luna, PhD, Universidad Veracruzana
COIL Expansion Phase:
- COIL Implementation Techniques
- Expansion Data
- Establishing Best Practices

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Integrating Sustainability Education with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in COIL Virtual Exchange Projects on Literary Studies and Culture

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We present two case studies that integrate topics in Sustainability education with diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to increase student awareness and build international virtual exchange networks. Using the COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) framework, students from partnering institutions build relationships through recorded icebreaker self-introductions, develop cross-cultural projects, improve their digital professionalism, and manage sustainability-informed dialogue on community development and social justice. We define higher education *diversity* in many ways, including racial, ethnic, gender, ability status, LGBTQ+ identity, veteran status, non-traditional and first-generation university experience.

In one COIL project, students from a SUNY New Paltz *Women in Literature* course partner with *English Textual Analysis* students at Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain on an *Artists of the Self* project. They examine non-conforming characters who resist cultural norms and values in order to create new identities for themselves as an act of resistance and survival. Three United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015) frame the students' critical thinking projects (#3 Good Health & Well Being; #5 Gender Equality; #10 Reduced Inequalities) as they compare and contrast Spanish and U.S. perceptions of women's mental health stigma, gender (non) conformity, teen suicide and sex work as relevant to their chosen stories. The students are also introduced to alternate social/economic/environmental sustainability frameworks that better represent the impacts of overlapping burdens represented by the 17 UN SDG categories, such as Kate Raworth's (2017) *Doughnut Model* and Julian Agyeman's (2003) *Just Sustainabilities*. Using literary analysis, archival and contemporary realia as well as psychologist and sex worker practitioner interviews, students collect evidence and build arguments that hinge works of literature to real world sustainability challenges. We provide theoretical frameworks for literary analysis, including Lee Anne Bell's (2019) *Storytelling for Social Justice*, by which students identify standard/stock stories; concealed stories; resistance stories; and emerging/transforming stories. The feminist texts open conversation on gender roles, intersectional subject positions; stereotypes, creativity, and other topics. In narrated power point presentations, international groups build strong arguments, explore inter-cultural similarity and difference, and develop personal relationships.

In a second project, Business students at UNIBE, Dominican Republic and *Literary Theory* students from SUNY New Paltz prepare for and hold a conversation on revisioning history and thinking through social justice topics related to UN SDGS #4 Quality Education, #8 Decent Work, #10 Reduced Inequalities and #11 Sustainable Cities and Communities. Students prepare self-introductions on Padlet, read poems of protest, learn about each other's regions, and participate in a structured discussion. With the global coronavirus pandemic as a shared challenge, students enter Zoom breakout groups to discuss "freedom from" and "freedom to"

with respect to COVID-19 restrictions and world-wide movements for social justice sparked by racial violence in the U.S. during summer 2020. Both global phenomena constitute failures in sustainability due to a breakdown in communication, networking, and *Partnerships for the Goals* (UN SDG #17). We also mention the SUNY COIL Global Commons project, in which students complete General Education courses and develop change agent skills by partnering with international NGOs to collaboratively tell their stories through UN SDG lenses.

References
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