



Transforming curricula through internationalisation and virtual exchanges



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Basic Overview

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COIL Acronym - What does it stand for?

- C** Collaborative: student-to-student learning to improve teamwork and collaboration skills.
- O** Online: learning how to work in a remote team and manage virtual tools in a professional manner.
- I** International: cross-cultural learning by bringing the world into your classroom, offering ALL students an international experience.
- L** Learning: practising professional skills and learning from peers around the world.

(Reference: <https://www.amsterdamuas.com/amsib/partners/academic-partners/virtualexchange-coil/virtual-exchange-coil.html>)



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What is COIL?

COIL connects accredited courses, linking the classrooms of two or more higher education institutions, each located in a different country or cultural setting. The COIL model does not merely promote students from different countries sharing an online classroom. Rather, COIL creates equitable team-taught learning environments where faculty from two cultures work together to develop a shared syllabus, emphasising experiential and collaborative student learning.

(Reference: <http://www.coilconsult.com/>)

Below is a link to a three-minute video explaining what Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is and how it engages students in powerful global learning.

<https://youtu.be/ASuCF-YRqtE>

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What does a COIL project look like?

COIL projects can take place in face-to-face, fully online, or hybrid (partly face-to-face, partly online) courses. Projects can involve complementary content. For example:

- Students in FIU professor Flavia Iuspa's online course in Education, 'Developing a Global Perspective,' and in an International Relations course taught by Alexis Paola Hernandez Pina at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua in Mexico, collaboratively determined an issue affecting Mexico and the US, and proposed a recommendation or solution to be enacted by an international private, government, or non-governmental institution.

Or courses can involve similar content:

- Students studying the processes of writing centres with FIU professor Glenn Hutchinson and Andrea Torres Perdigón at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Colombia, collaboratively conducted research in English and Spanish and prepared conference proposals on effective writing tutoring in bilingual settings.
- For more information, consult reference: <https://coil.fiu.edu>

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How does COIL link to internationalisation?

COIL is a new teaching and learning paradigm that promotes the development of intercultural competence across shared mutual learning environments. A COIL virtual exchange is specifically designed to link students who have different cultural and geographical perspectives and experiences. Students engage in learning both through their own lens and by exchanging their cultural lenses as they move through the course content and assignments together. Students reflect with each other, thereby facilitating a cross-cultural dialogue that brings a global dimension to the course content. COIL contributes to internationalisation at home in that it purposefully integrates international and intercultural dimensions into the formal curriculum. It is an inclusive internationalisation strategy, which contributes to realising the goal that all students should benefit from internationalisation.

(Reference: <http://coil.suny.edu/>)



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What does COIL offer academics?

- Assists academics in developing new partnerships.
- Assists academics to facilitate intercultural learning.
- Assists academics to develop internationalised learning outcomes.
- Enables academics to design and develop assessments for a collaborative task.
- Enables discussions about pedagogies and the curriculum with international peers.
- Allows academics to internationalise their curriculum.
- Allows academics to have a better understanding of decolonising the curriculum.
- Enables academics to motivate students and to get them on board!
- COIL collaboration can lead to research collaboration, joint publications, and can help academics expand their professional network.

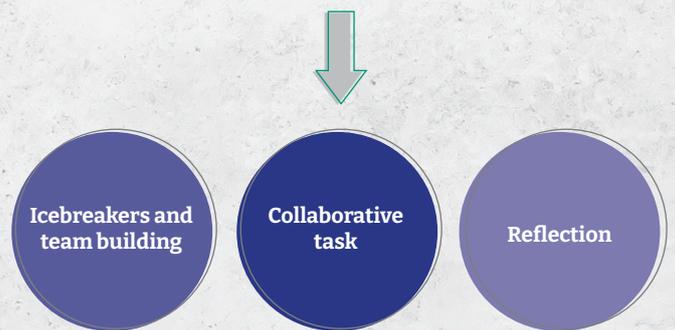
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What does COIL offer students?

- Gives all students the possibility of an international experience.
- It prepares students for an international mobility - whether physical or virtual.
- Creates awareness and knowledge about other cultures, strengthening cross-cultural collaboration.
- Strengthens the ability to work in cross-national and virtual teams.
- Promotes experiential and collaborative student learning.
- Improves competency in English (or other languages) in authentic communicative contexts.
- Develops online communicative competence, and digital literacy.
- Enhances digitisation skills, which is an important 21st Century skill.
- Enhances employability skills (i.e. communication, language, cultural, leadership, and time management skills).
- Opportunities to build diverse personal relationships.

(Reference: <https://www.amsterdamuas.com/>)

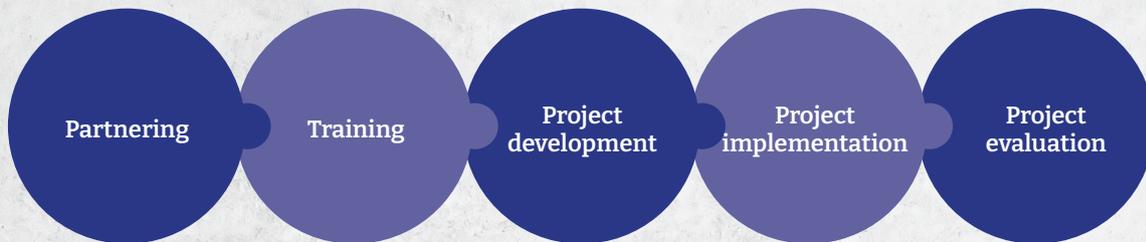
Each COIL project is unique, but they have the following student activities in common:



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COIL progression and COIL course design

- Outlined below are the steps involved in the COIL development process. It should be noted that each COIL project is unique as embedded into a specific curriculum or module. Therefore, training is such a key component to developing an effective COIL project.



- There is no fixed template for COIL course design, but it can be helpful to consider staging and task sequences that others have used, and which have proven to be successful. These need to be re-shaped according to local conditions, such as the relative time zones of partners, the language fluency of participants, and the type of content and learning objectives each COIL is developing. **Outlined below is one schema to consider:**

Phases/tasks typical in COIL projects running from five to eight weeks

1. Introduction (one to two weeks)

- Assess baseline student expectations
- Icebreaker activities
- Introduction to tools/software
- Establish project framework/plan
- Formation of groups/teams

2. Engagement (one week)

- Modelling collaborative exchange across groups and individuals
- Short comparison/analysis project

3. Collaboration (two to three weeks)

- Structured group activity
- Joint research
- Problem solving/conflict resolution

4. Conclusion (one to two weeks)

- Co-presentation or sharing of student projects
- Student reflections
- Assessment of course

(Reference Jon Rubin: Coil Consulting: <http://www.coilconsult.com/>)

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What does COIL offer universities?

- Enables inclusive internationalisation
- Facilitates intercultural learning
- Contributes to the development of new collaborations and partnerships
- Enhances the institutional profile

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How to implement COIL? What platforms/materials can be used

Any online communication medium can be used to implement COIL. The platforms listed below are examples of mediums that can be used, but it is not an exhaustive list:

- Skype
- Zoom
- Blackboard
- One drive
- Google drive
- MS Teams
- Moodle

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COIL training and guidance

- Four to six weeks of guided training will be provided by the iKudu Project.
- How will you be supported in your COIL development process?

Phase	Supported by / in collaboration with your COIL partner
Partnering	International Office/COIL coordinator
Training	COIL coordinator, in collaboration with International Office and/or Teaching and Learning
Project development	With your COIL partner, coached by your COIL coordinator
Project implementation	With your COIL partner and supported by IT
Project evaluation	With your COIL partner and supported by your COIL coordinator

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Example of successful COIL projects

1. **Title:** 2020 CU-UB-UFS COIL Project - Business Analytics Application in Industries

This project was a voluntary project for collaborative online learning. It was conducted by a group of students from Coventry University (Coventry, UK), University of Bremen (Bremen, Germany) and the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein, South Africa).

The subject area (i.e. name of module, credits, etc): Project was conducted by the Marketing Honours group as one of their assignments for the Consumer Behaviour module (ECBR6814).

Frequency of lectures: The lectures at both universities were conducted online on a weekly basis using Moodle.

Class sizes at each university: UFS 15 students, Coventry 30 students, University of Bremen 35 students.

Online mediums used Moodle and presentations were recorded by different software, such as Screencast-O-Matic (<https://screencast-o-matic.com/>).

Duration of project: The project started on 5 February and ended on 29 March 2020.

Project leaders: Prof Martin Missong (University of Bremen), Dr Eugene Maziriri (University of the Free State), Dr Mahdi Bashiri (Coventry University), Dr Abdulrahman Al-Surmi.

For more information on the iKudu Project: please consult the project website on: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/ikudu/iKudu-home>

UCoventry and UFS Collaboration

2. UCoventry and UFS Collaboration

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DUT and AUAS Collaboration

3. DUT and AUAS Collaboration

Title: Doing Business in South Africa and the Netherlands Mini Documentary Research Video

Universities involved: DUrban University of Technology and Amsterdam University of Applied Science

The subject area: Global teams and project management

Frequency of lectures: Weekly

Class sizes at each university: 50 on each side

Online mediums used: MS Teams, WhatsApp, Google Drive and Google Docs

The collaborative task: Personal Introduction Video. Team Charter plus team role analysis (Online Teamrole Test) describing how you intend to work together and build an effective team. Reports of your research and project progress updates. Country and industry profiles and cultural analyses, interviews with entrepreneurs. Recommendations. Mini documentary video created by your virtual team. Video and script

Duration of project: 13 September-14 November

Project leaders/teachers: DUT: Trevor Naidoo: Operations and Quality Management, AUAS: Business and Economics: Barbara Ciccarelli and Randy Bundel

UCoventry and CUT Collaboration

4. UCoventry and CUT Collaboration

Title: Risk communication

Universities involved: Central University of Technology and Coventry University

The subject area: Public health and risk and disaster management

Frequency of lectures: Every Thursday for four weeks, two-hour sessions

Class sizes at each university: CUT – 25; CU - 25

Online mediums used: ZOOM, Padlet, Google Jamboard. Recordings were also used for students to catch up.

The collaborative task: Students were tasked with investigating South African public health issues through the theoretical lens of risk and disaster management. Framed around COVID and the issues relating to lockdown and spread of communicable public diseases (I.E. COVID), students engaged in lectures, seminars, students discussion, and group discussions/presentations to collaboratively share knowledge and insight across the South African and UK student participants.

Duration of project: 21 March-21 April

Project leaders/teachers: Nkhebenyane Jane and Yung-Fang Chen

THUAS and DUT Collaboration

5. THUAS and DUT Collaboration

Title: Urban environment

Universities involved: The Hague University of Applied Sciences and Durban University of Technology

The subject area: Exploring and discovering the urban environment around the different universities.

Frequency of lectures: There were two lectures, one from THUAS and the other lecture was from DUT. A student assistant from THUAS was also involved in this project.

Class sizes at each university: The class size from THUAS was 24 students. From DUT there were 84 students involved.

Online mediums used: Padlet, WhatsApp, Zoom, Teams

The collaborative task: The students had to do research about each other's living environment; after doing the research, they had to take a look about the similarities and the differences in living environment.

Duration of project: 26 April-25 June

Project leaders/teachers: Catharine Womack and Cateleine de Jong

UAntwerp and UL Collaboration

6. UAntwerp and UL Collaboration

Title: Consulting experts within international, interdisciplinary, intercultural, multilingual contexts: Copyright infringement in a curriculum and syllabus design process

Universities involved: The students participating in the project were from the University of Antwerp (UA) in Belgium and the University of Limpopo (UL) in South Africa.

The subject area: The students from UA were taking a master's course in language curriculum and syllabus design (CSD), while the UL students were taking business law for master's students, with copyright law being one subdivision of their course.

Frequency of lectures: Both courses had weekly online lectures. However, for the actual COIL, only two joint lectures were held.

Class sizes at each university: There were five UA students and seven UL students.

Online mediums used: For the two joint online lectures, Blackboard was used. The lecturer and students at UL used a guest link to access the Blackboard Collaborate classroom of the UA course. For peer collaboration, Edmodo was used. Edmodo functioned as a joint learner management system where both lecturers and all students were able to communicate with one another. On Edmodo, students were also divided into smaller groups and assigned a (private) collaboration space on the platform for performing tasks, activities and making arrangements related to the project. Students also used WhatsApp as an additional communication tool among themselves.

The collaborative task: The goal of the project was twofold. First, the goal was to help students develop skills for consulting with experts within international, interdisciplinary, intercultural, multilingual contexts. Second, the students were required to examine a set of language learning materials for possible copyright infringement. All students were thus required to watch and discuss short, recorded lectures on copyright law, as well as consultation skills and procedures and intercultural communication skills. The CSD students then had to consult the law students on potential copyright infringement in the language learning materials that they were working on at the time. The law students, in turn had to provide legal advice so that the CSD students could make decisions about possible adaptation of their materials. Students were then required to perform and record a mock consultation on possible copyright infringement in the language learning materials. The law students provided legal advice, while the language students provided feedback on (intercultural) communication and language skills.

Duration of project: The project started on 1 April and ended on 20 May.

Project leaders/teachers: Dr Marilize Pretorius from UA and Dr Gerda van Niekerk at UL.

UNIVEN and AUAS Collaboration

7. UNIVEN and AUAS Collaboration

Title: Comparing Students' Consumption Behaviours: A Cross-Cultural Exercise

Universities involved: Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) and University of Venda (South Africa)

Duration of project: 26 April 2021 to 7 June 2021

Project leaders/teachers: Dr Lufuluvhi Mudimeli (UNIVEN) and Ms Chie Misumi (AUAS)

Class sizes at each university: 16

Online mediums used: English

Objectives: Examine each other's interests, hobbies, preferred leisure activities, shopping behaviours, favourite types of food, favourite brands of clothes, technology, etc. This discussion should extend to learning each other's values, including how their lifestyles – which are described above – are coming from these values. Determine to what extent college students in Amsterdam and in Thohoyandou (South Africa) are similar/different. Do research on women role models of each country. Please choose different fields, for example, politics, business, etc. Extend the knowledge on values as to why women's roles are appreciated in the society. How can we promote gender equality in each country? This needs to come from discussions of both countries.

Frequency of lectures:

Week	To do
26 April-30 April	Introduction: Matching and Kick-off
3 May-9 May	AMSIB May vacation week
10 May-4 June 2021	Start your collaboration: Spend time answering the questions and exchanging information with each other; come up with suggestions regarding products/ services for the other country
7 June 2021	Summarise learning experiences in writing; submit to your professor

The collaborative task: Form small groups consisting of students from AUAS and the University of Venda. Exchange contact information and determine how to best communicate with each other. Come up with specific questions that would help answer the objectives (above). These questions can certainly be different from group to group; depending on each group's composition and interests. Exchange information to learn more about each other, related to the questions you came up with. Based on what you learned about each other, come up with suggestions regarding how we can promote gender equality in both countries. Summarise your learning experiences (from #4) and suggestions (from #5 as a group) in a written document (max. 1 500 words; group work); Each student will also write a reflection of 500 words (personal assignment). In particular, what did you learn from this experience? How will you be able to use this knowledge in the future? What challenges, if any, did you experience? Do you have anything else you would like to share? Try to analyse your interactions with the theories that you have learned at CCA and CCM.

For more information on the iKudu Project: please consult the project website on: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/ikudu/iKudu-home>