

Fostering Cross-Cultural Understanding Through Collaborative Online International Learning Experiences (COIL)

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Abstract

Individuals with global competence possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to understand and address international challenges through various perspectives. Higher education institutions play a crucial role in cultivating these qualities by offering students chances to immerse in different cultures and ideas. One traditional method is through study abroad programs. However, the 2018-2019 Open Doors Report reveals a gap: only 2% of U.S. undergraduates participate in such programs annually, with just 16% engaging in study abroad experiences throughout their four-year degree (IIE, 2020).

As an innovative alternative, the Collaborative Online International Learning Experience (COIL) emerges as a powerful approach, perfectly aligned with the principles of Global Learning and Global Competence. These frameworks emphasize the importance of active engagement, communication, and the examination of intricate global issues from diverse viewpoints. COIL fosters meaningful collaborations between students and faculty, offering substantial opportunities for international exposure without leaving the classroom.

This presentation will explore the transformative potential of the COIL experience in fostering cultural awareness, broadening perspectives, and reinforcing our roles as global citizens. This presentation will discuss COIL within the global learning and global competence frameworks, review how to integrate COIL into the curriculum, and provide a space to reflect on COIL as a viable pedagogical tool in higher education courses to enhance global learning.

Keywords: Global Learning, Global Competence, Curriculum Design, Collaborative Online International Learning Experience