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## **Collaborative Online International Learning: Connecting Chilean and American University Students Through COIL**

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### **Abstract**

COIL is defined as an approach to teaching and learning that brings together geographically distant instructors and students from different lingua-cultural backgrounds to communicate and collaborate through online tools, such as virtual exchanges and other platforms (SUNY, n.d.) Through a college-level English 101 class of Early Cohort students at Montgomery College, Professor Porcaro created an interactive journalism unit pairing students at two Chilean universities learning English proficiency and American students learning journalistic and research practices to create and implement interviews, with the final deliverables including a formal human-interest piece displaying cultural competency and a dual-class Padlet that features these projects as an online magazine. While Chilean students focused primarily on improving their English writing and speaking skills in an academic context, American student curriculum was centered pedagogically on collaborative learning, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, and the development of intercultural competence. Goals for both groups of students included navigating different communication styles via technology, problem-solving, and improved clarity in English communication skills. Strengthening source-vetting, researching, writing, and presenting skills enabled this to fit into Montgomery College's English curriculum. Pre- and post-survey data (qualitative and quantitative) were collected through Microsoft Forms from 19 American students (100% of participants) and 5 Chilean students (30% of participants) and showed growth in academic, social, and cultural understanding ideals, and will be discussed in detail as part of the presentation, which will also include a slide deck and the aforementioned Padlet of student projects. Cultural competencies, geographical knowledge, and communication skills increased between 5% and 19%.

**Keywords:** Technology; Cultural Competencies; Journalism; Communication; Engagement