

HOW CAN COIL BE USED?

It's important to first understand the complexity of the space that COIL fills and can be applied. There is no clear way to categorize its application because each practice can be intertwined and applied to the next.

A second point to note is that every exchange is a culture exchange. No matter the area of study nor the way in which COIL is applied, culture and language will play a key role in each collaboration.

With that in mind, let's explore the ways in which COIL can support learning :



By Subject

Single Disciplinary (Understanding)

Students within the same area of study collaborate with a partnered classroom on projects and/or activities with the benefit of gaining understanding about the approach and perspectives of the other classroom.

Example

An anatomy class in Montreal, Canada partners with an anatomy class in Osaka, Japan to complete an activity outlining various muscle groups in the body.

Cross Disciplinary (Project Based)

Students from different areas of study collaborate on a project that weaves their two disciplines together to accomplish a goal. This is done while simultaneously exposing the students to the new culture and perspective of the other classroom.

Example

Engineering students in Stockholm, Sweden partner with business students in São Paulo, Brazil in order to build a product concept and create a comprehensive business plan.

By Activity

Cultura

Through activities, such as word association and reactions to hypothetical situations, MIT developed Cultura tools help students see things directly from other cultural perspectives and in doing so, create a real life textbook.

Example

Students in Berlin, Germany and students in Mumbai, India are grouped and asked to take photos of day-to-day things that represent their culture. They then upload them, send them to their partners, make observations, and present their findings to the class.

Project Based Learning

By taking class subjects and turning them into tangible exercises through applied group projects, students gain real life experience in teamwork and in their fields of study.

Example

In order to teach her students about the process of photosynthesis, a biology teacher has her students plant, tend to, and monitor seedlings over the course of the term. At the end of the class they will reflect and present on their findings.

By Type

Student Mobility Program ※¹

COIL can be used before, during, or after a study abroad program.

By Timeframe

One-Time Virtual Exchange

The exchange may consist of a small number of virtual interactions with multiple overseas partner universities over one to three weeks.

Extended: Entire Semester

COIL method is implemented into the course for the entire duration of a semester.

Module Exchange

This model features a lecture exchange with overseas partner universities.

Enhanced: 6-8 Weeks

This is the standard model of COIL practice, consisting of a 6-8 weeks long virtual exchange and collaboration activities.

To Reiterate

Yes, the ways in which COIL can be utilized is diverse and highly flexible. Why don't we explore another example where each of these areas intertwine.

Meet Dr. Jones. Dr. Jones is a professor of business administration at the University of Southern California. He partners with Mme. Dubois, a professor of graphic design at the Paris College of Art in a Cross Disciplinary COIL exchange. The professors agree on English as a lingua franca for their collaboration and that it will last two weeks for a one-time virtual exchange. In order to teach their students about marketing, they choose a project based learning model to create an activity where the business students will build a marketing campaign while the design students create all of the necessary visual collateral. The students are grouped and required to collaborate in order to present a full campaign by the end of the exchange.

This exchange addressed the areas: subject, activity, and timeframe. The students not only got to develop interdisciplinary skills through collaborating with colleagues from a different discipline, but they also got to apply their learning in a multicultural environment.



※¹ Student mobility is any opportunity for students to work or study abroad whilst undertaking their degree program – whether undergraduate or postgraduate. (University of Glasgow*)