

# Chapter 2

## Inclusive Learning: Perspectives on Virtual Exchange and Global Learning



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### 2.1 Introduction

The unprecedented COVID-19 crisis has provided different scenarios in the most diverse sectors of life. In education, it has disrupted face to face pedagogical teaching and created challenges in the continuity of the teaching/learning process. Digital technologies have allowed contexts and possibilities to connect people, languages, and cultures beyond geographical borders and financial and sanitary restrictions. The pandemic put a pause on in person classes and completely changed the college experience. Students were switched online for an undetermined period of time.

This chapter aims at sharing how the virtual exchange/telecollaboration/collaboration online/collaborative online international learning allowed us to engage in an opportunity to bring together students while exploring different cultures and international learning in a virtual setting. We hope to highlight this collaboration involving Brazilian and US American students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds in higher education.

At the start of this collaboration, Brazilian students were eager to engage in an international linguistic and cultural experience. English Language learners from

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Brazil were provided the opportunity through Brazilian Virtual Exchange Program (BRaVE-Unesp) and SUNY COIL to establish meaningful intercultural conversation in sustained tasks and discussions with students from Jefferson Community College. While the students were the main focus in this collaboration, the course instructors were given the opportunity to engage in creative and innovative course development to address students' needs to quickly connect, converse, and collaborate.

Globalization and internationalization have become more visible and desired during the pandemic, in which home mobility programs were being fostered. Assuming that "Internationalization processes challenge the very notion of autonomy, reshaped as interconnectedness and interdependence" (Gimenez, 2020, p. 9), it is feasible to embrace possibilities as such to foster motivation and engagement toward global learning.

Arthur O. Eve (2017) stated in an interview that "Education is the number one issue today, tomorrow and forever." The Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) combines access, academic support, and supplemental financial assistance to make higher education possible for students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. Codified in New York State Education Law §6452, the Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program, formally established the intent to ensure provision of access to the University for low-income students among other intents to go above and beyond for student success. Disadvantaged students are defined as students who experience historical economic and cultural deprivation. Indicators include, but are not limited to, students who have endured long-term economic deprivation, membership in a group underrepresented in higher education, a record of inadequate schooling, little or no accumulation of assets, and so on. The Arthur O. Eve EOP has proven to be one of the most successful opportunity programs in New York State, graduating more than 80,000 students who continue to live in New York, enriching its economic and social fabric.

Global learning and international learning are among those actions that create and ensure student success. The Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program will continue to be successful as we look for ways to be innovative and forward-thinking in our program development. High Impact Practices (HIPs), according to the American Association of Colleges and Universities, are evidence-based teaching and learning practices that show significant educational benefits for students who participate in them (AAC&U, 2022) – especially for those students in programs such as EOP. Students who qualify for EOP would rarely be afforded the opportunity to study abroad, as this opportunity is fairly expensive and at times viewed as a disruptor of the path toward completion. The State University of New York (SUNY) COIL provided the EOP an opportunity to engage students in intercultural and meaningful online engagement. EOP works toward ensuring that students who already lack the resources necessary to navigate higher education are provided the opportunity to elevate their college experience.

Much like their American EOP peers, Brazilian students lack opportunities to engage in international learning due to geographical and financial issues, which were exacerbated during the pandemic. Implemented at Unesp, since 2018, as a way to foster internationalization at home, the BRaVE Program aims to promote the

resignification and reconceptualization of teaching-learning spaces, including virtual interactions that can enrich student training in soft skills, such as empathy, collaboration, flexibility, and ability to communicate interculturally (Salomão & Freire Junior, 2020). According to Salomão (2020), the class-to-class format of collaboration in the BRaVE Program encourages professors and their university partners abroad to work collaboratively to plan tasks that engage students in learning together through digital technologies, using active methodologies and preferably connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The contact established between classes can be entirely online, with synchronous or asynchronous interactions, or in hybrid formats, seeking to create a context that emphasizes learning through experience and joint knowledge construction.

BRaVE/SUNY COIL was the best opportunity to expose students to international learning through authentic scenarios for teaching/learning. This collaboration provided EOP pre-freshman and second-year UNESP students the opportunity to engage in virtual exchange. Students engaged in soft skill development, enhanced their viewpoint of the world, clarified their place in the world, encouraged active listening, linguistic development, boost in self-confidence, and directly impacted their self-motivation and interest in higher education. Immediately, students in this collaboration discovered overlap in their experiences and cultures, discussed their concerns about college education, and explored the various ways they were searching for themselves and who they will be in the future through education.

In this chapter, we will share the outcomes of this pilot collaboration between Brazil and the United States. We will present the theoretical frameworks that guided our pedagogy, discuss virtual exchange, telecollaboration, teacher education in Brazil, and also the importance of global learning as a High Impact Practice for student success. Additionally, we will expand on the collaboration design utilized throughout the collaboration. Then, we will share material/activity that was produced during the experience as well as the students' reports in order to highlight their perspective. Readers will see the impact that this short collaboration had on students and the importance of global learning in the teaching/learning process.

## 2.2 Global Learning

Global learning is not an opportunity afforded to every student in higher education. Students are encouraged to engage in international experiences, but as of recently, opportunities afforded to students to do so generally require social and economic capital. For many students, global learning has been limited to studying abroad, which has yet to be an equitable experience in which all students can partake. However, the skills gained by participating in global learning are what employers are searching for in new graduates.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers outlined eight career competencies of which a career-ready student should exhibit post-graduation: career and self-development, communication, critical thinking, equity and inclusion,

leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2021). This collaboration provided students the opportunity to begin to develop four of the eight competencies over the course of 5 weeks. In addition to this, our institutions were given the opportunity to make global learning equitable, inclusive, and accessible for students.

The pandemic has exposed the fragilities and needs of today's learners and changed the way digital and technological advances, along with the internet, can be utilized to ensure learning. The use of computers and mobile devices has greatly increased in the teaching and learning process worldwide. We cannot deny that globalization and opportunities for transcultural access, education, and communication have broadened perspectives.

According to Vassallo and Telles (2009), broader perspectives are offered to professors of foreign language students through the new learning environments that are mediated by the computer. As Ware and Kramsch (2005) state, web-based technologies have become promising examples of computer-based learning, providing language students with interactions across geographic, linguistic, and cultural lines. The authors have argued that the increasingly complex technological landscape fosters cross-cultural communication and creates scenarios that extend language teacher roles.

Belz states that "telecollaboration is characterized by institutionalized, electronically mediated intercultural communication under the guidance of a language cultural expert (i.e., teacher) for the purposes of foreign language learning and the development of intercultural competence" (2003, p.2). According to her:

Telecollaboration involves the application of global computer networks to foreign (and second) language learning and teaching in institutionalized settings. In telecollaborative partnerships, internationally dispersed learners in parallel language classes use Internet communication tools such as e-mail, synchronous chat, threaded discussion, and MOOs (as well as other forms of electronically mediated communication), in order to support social interaction, dialogue, debate, and intercultural exchange. (Belz, 2003, p.2).

It is clear that telecollaboration can optimize practices performed in classrooms in linguistic, cultural exchange and also allow students to dive into a hands-on experience while learning a language or sharing knowledge. The process of teaching and learning foreign languages can go beyond classes as the students take part in the structuring and constructing of knowledge.

Ware and O'Dowd (2008) note that online communication tools have been taken up eagerly by the foreign language teaching community and that studies have explored the ways different configurations of telecollaboration have impacted students' language development through online interactions in the target language.

Telecollaboration/collaboration online/virtual exchange can also help students to become responsible for his/her learning goals, to develop reflexivity and intercultural competence when paired with foreigners, and to be aware of issues concerning identity, language, and culture, we agree with the authors when they affirm:

[...] VE has great potential to foster a range of twenty-first-century employability skills including media and digital literacy, communication skills, global awareness, empathy, critical and analytical thinking, foreign language skills and intercultural competences, and

it can also be used to supplement and enhance universities' physical exchange programmes. (Beaven, & O'Dowd, R., 2019, p.15).

The sociological theory of cultural capital introduced by Bourdieu (1986) also informed the reasoning to engage Brazilian and American students in this project. Capital is not only economic but also social and cultural.

Capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as economic capital, which is immediate and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242).

The cultural and social capital gained by the practice of global learning provides students with an undeniable opportunity of meaningful intercultural interactions, which is necessary for advancement. There is an urgent need to provide students with the tools necessary to compete in the job market. By introducing global learning, students gain a valuable education that will elevate their student success and begin to create equitable outcomes for low-income students.

The students who participated in this collaboration entered higher education at a disadvantage. Mantsios (2007) expands on how these disadvantages occur when he says, "People do not choose to be poor or working class; instead, they are limited and confined by the opportunities afforded or denied them by a social and economic system." Higher education is expected to provide those from low-income households upward mobility, but the doors are barely cracked open.

In this collaboration and many others, our EOPs seek to create limitless opportunities that would otherwise not be afforded to our students. Global learning in a virtual space opens up the door to collaboration and engagement on a global scale. Class status is a clear indicator on whether students attend college and graduate from college. This collaboration was intended to reduce the gaps of educational attainment for students from low-income households and to increase success both in college and beyond.

This collaboration helped students gain an understanding of self, society, and history. C. Wright Mills stated that:

The individual can understand her own experience and gauge her own fate only by locating herself within her period, that she can know her own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in her circumstances... By the fact of this living, he contributes, however minutely, to the shaping of this society and to the course of its history, even as he is made by society and by its historical push and shove. (MILLS, 1959, p. 5).

Throughout the summer, students were encouraged to share parts of themselves and to learn about each other's cultures. Additionally, students were transported past their borders and into the lives of their peers. Students engaged in meaningful conversations that encouraged them to learn about themselves and the global world. Furthermore, global learning is fundamentally necessary for all students. The National Association of College and Employers stated that student graduates should

“seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one’s understanding of people from different demographic groups and that leads to personal growth” (NACE, 2021, p.5).

### 2.3 Critical Thinking Skills and Storytelling

At the core of this collaboration was the opportunity for students to engage in two key elements necessary to encourage learning: critical thinking and storytelling. Critical thinking is essential to ensuring students are actively engaged in learning and engagement. “Critical thinking requires us to use our imagination, seeing things from perspectives other than our own and envisioning the likely consequences of our position” (Hooks, 2010, p. 10).

Brazilian and US American students were pushed to use their sociological imagination and to see the world through a brand new perspective. Most importantly, students were encouraged to engage in storytelling throughout the collaboration. Most importantly students were encouraged to engage in storytelling throughout the collaboration. Storytelling is a technique that sparks and ignites students to connect and engage in critical thinking. Stories help us connect to a world beyond ourselves (Hooks, 1994).

Global learning is inherently focused on engaging students with the world beyond themselves and their community. In this collaboration, instructors and students alike shared their unique stories. Storytelling and critical thinking are necessary, as we develop our students into critically conscious adults who are dedicated to deep learning. Each of these theories and theorists provided the foundation for the development of our collaboration. The intricate ways all of these theories intersect throughout the collaboration allows us to develop the young adults over the course of five weeks.

### 2.4 Methodology

The collaboration started with the introduction of the main professors for the courses from Brazil and America. The professors utilized the COIL methodology to design the course, that is, two classes in different higher-education institutions collaborate during a period of time, as shown in Fig. 2.1.

The SUNY COIL office provided guidance for the ways in which institutions can engage in collaboration online. Figure 2.1 is an example of how COIL collaborations take place across the system.

Figure 2.2 shows the progression of a virtual exchange collaboration. Planning usually includes a sequence of activities to be carried out by mixed teams addressing real-world issues. It usually begins with an “icebreaker” so that students introduce themselves and get to know each other and explore intercultural elements. Then the

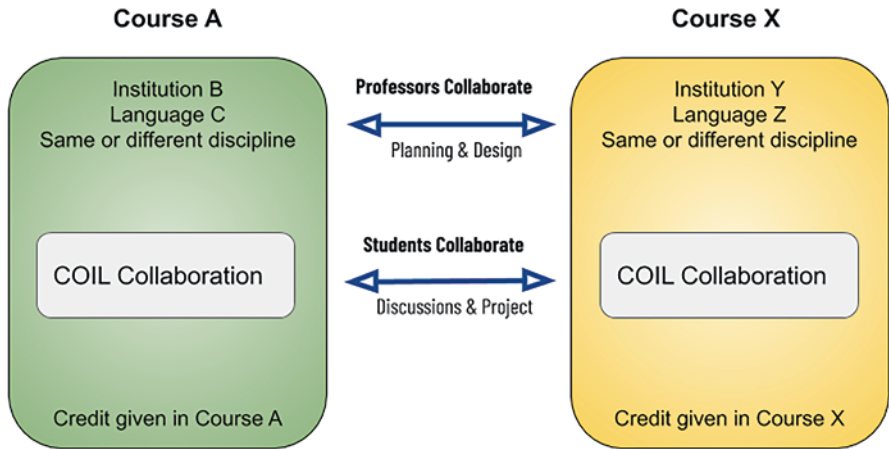


Fig. 2.1 SUNY COIL image on how a COIL Collaboration gets started, retrieved from <https://online.suny.edu/introtocoil/suny-coil-what-is/> 2022

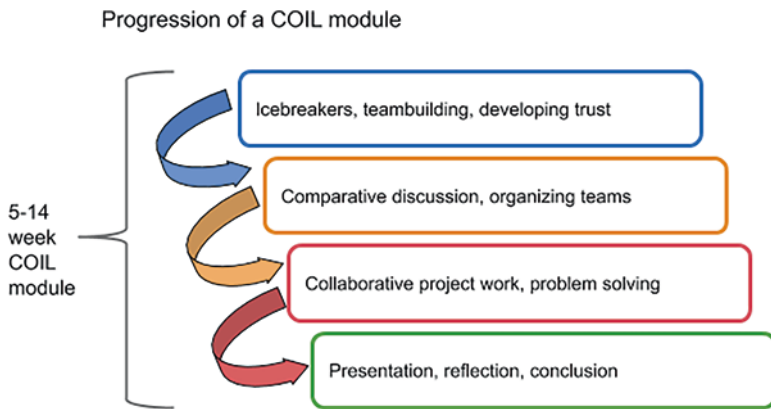


Fig. 2.2 The SUNY COIL model, retrieved from <https://online.suny.edu/introtocoil/suny-coil-what-is/> (SUNY COIL, 2022)

next tasks proposed should be linked to the common content that teachers intend to explore, usually developed from a problem-solving perspective. The final outputs can take the form of a report, slide show, video production, or creation of a product or campaign.

The instructors set out to address the following learning outcomes: Linguistic and Cultural Development, Exploration, Experience, Learn Yourself, Navigate JCC, Get Connected & Stay Connected, Problem Solving, and Global Awareness. The COIL methodology helped the professors design the course in four stages: team building, discussion, project, and conclusion. Outlined below are the methods

utilized in each stage and how we were able to accomplish it throughout the course. The collaborative online international learning interactions were conducted for 5 weeks for an hour and a half every Friday. The purpose of the classes was to allow students the opportunity to participate in cultural exchange. In this stage, students were encouraged to spend the class time analyzing and discussing images from both cultures.

Class time was dominated primarily through discussion. The course utilized a seminar style, giving students control of the conversation while allowing instructors to interject when necessary such as to avoid misunderstandings on specific cultural issues for students at both institutions or to redirect students to the main discussion points and questions. Zoom technology was used to create small groups, which encouraged conversation. Discussions were facilitated by the instructors who took turns going to each small group and giving feedback on their work and discussion. This methodology allowed BR and US students to go beyond the English language and engage in conversations surrounding cultural differences and similarities.

Afterward, students were given prompts for additional discussion about higher education. Finally, students were provided the opportunity to create a project collaboratively, which was presented at the last meeting. Based on these stages, the virtual exchange experience we share in this chapter will be reported utilizing a qualitative methodology (André, 2013; Burns, 1999). Data collection instruments involved field notes and students' weekly written reports.

### **Collaborative Journey**

After several meetings between the professors, assistance from BRaVE, and SUNY COIL trainings, our collaboration began on July 8, 2021. Prior to the Brazilian and American peers meeting the professors set up a time to meet with their new students. EOP Students met their Brazilian instructor and the Brazilian students met with the EOP instructor. At this meeting, the professors introduced themselves to their new students and shared the goals and expectations of the collaboration. Students were reminded that their excitement was welcome and encouraged them to completely immerse themselves in this experience. Professors utilized growth mindset language by encouraging students to hold on to the joy of the project and release the fear and anxiety that comes with meeting someone new. Students were motivated to dive headfirst into this collaboration and to be open-minded.

By the first collaborative class, the students were familiar with the foreign professor, which helped them bond and feel more comfortable to get started. The professors restated the purpose of the collaboration and also some ground rules such as the "one mic rule" (reminding students to leave space for the person holding the mic to speak without interruption), respectfulness, and the confidence to make mistakes and be corrected. Students were presented with maps of each country and locality in order to help students visualize where in their respective countries they were from.

The first meeting focused on breaking the ice between the student groups. The icebreaker activity was intended to foster the first of many conversations that they would have with each other while simultaneously imparting knowledge from their culture.



Students were asked to share their names and career goals, then prompted to go through a slideshow of pictures that represented something from each respective country. Students were divided into small groups to ensure every student was given a chance to speak and interact with each other. In the small breakout rooms, students were provided popular images from their respective nation that could be easily described, providing a space for students to exchange cultural knowledge. Additionally, the professors were hopeful that the images would spark additional conversations around values and cultural significance.

While the photos were intended to allow for students to see the similarities and differences in daily life in Brazil in comparison to the United States, students from Northern New York, Central New York, and New York City found that even within hours of each other, there were fundamental differences in the way they experienced the images on the screen. Some students highlighted the differences in climate, class, buildings, farming, and even the ice cream truck and music associated with it.

After interacting with the pictures, students were asked to select a speaker in the group to share and report out with the larger class. They were given prompts to have further discussion about their school and other questions such as: *How do you make friends in the virtual world? What are your favorite phone apps? What do you do just for fun? Do you have a job? What do you do?* The prompts were utilized to encourage a speedy connection between students in their first meeting as we didn't have many more meetings before the next stage. At the conclusion of the session email addresses were exchanged before leaving the virtual classroom.

After every session students were expected to share their thoughts on the experience. Throughout this analysis, we will be sharing student feedback. Charts 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 below show Brazilian and American students' feedback after the first meeting.

It is important to note that Brazilian students were in English II classes, so their proficiency was not very high as they are learners of the English language. Besides their fear of not being able to communicate with native speakers, they overcame difficulties in order to take part in the virtual exchange. The comments on Chart 2.1 express their motivation towards the experience as well as expectations to learn.

**Chart 2.1** Brazilian feedback on the first session

BR Student	How do you evaluate the DAY 1 experience? Comment. Explain
C	That was an amazing experience, I learned a lot with them, especially something that we already saw in American movies; even if I don't understand some words that they say, I loved the way that they talked with us; they were very sweet people. I hope that we can learn a lot of things with them, and they can learn with us, bringing the culture of their country, and we taking our culture to them
G	The first day came up to be better than I expected. The JCC students were very patient with us, and we had an exchange of knowledge. It's pretty nice to get the chance to introduce my country to other people
N	The first day of the collaboration was good! At first, I was scared to talk because I'm not fluent, but in the end, I was feeling more confident, and I think this experience will be great to get better in this subject and to get to know the students from JCC

**Chart 2.2** American feedback on the first session

AM Student	What is the name of your Brazilian peers? What did you learn about students from UNESP? That is, favorite movie, career goal, friendships, etc. What was an unexpected similarity that you found with your partners? Did any of your fears come true? If so, which one? How did you deal with it? If not, how did it feel?
K	(...) they really are outgoing and amazing people. It was awkward at first, but i eventually got to know them and realized they were so fun. I learned that they dont have school buses or ice cream trucks. (...) I learned that mostly all of my classmates from Brazil are studying the english language in some way, shape, or form. Some of them stated they wanted to be an english teacher one day. For some reason, I didn't think they would be as outgoing as they were. None of my fears came true (...)
A	(...) I learned about how a lot of the Brazilian students wanted to be English teachers. I also learned simple things like how most of the student have never eaten a bagel. An unexpected similarity that I found with my partners is that in Brazil, they normally do not eat a large breakfast and wait until lunch and/or dinner to have a big meal, and I also do this. I did not have any fears about the COIL class, but my microphone did not work properly during that meeting, so I solved it by typing in the chat but keeping my typing minimal so that I did not overflow the chat box
M	I don't remember all of my Brazilian peers names yet, but I am going to do my best to learn them! I remember (...) because we all got onto the discussion of snow a lot. We didn't really get onto the topics of personal life because they were all very excited to help explain the differences between Brazil and New York, but I do remember one or two of them stating that they liked playing football, which is our soccer. It never occured to me that they would also be nervous about our interactions. However, after a short span of time, we all warmed up to each other and started talking more; some of my peers even began to tell me some jokes. One of my fears did come true. I was the only one speaking at the start, which made me very anxious because I can be a very shy person sometimes. Yet like I said, after awhile, we got comfortable with one another to the point that I wasn't the only one talking. I also wanted to share the fact that I absolutely love this great experience that you're giving all of us students. This class is by far one of my favorites that I've ever taken, and we've only had one class

**Chart 2.3** Brazilian feedback during second session

BR A	People can take loans to pay their college/People value the private education more than the public one/You can do extracurricular activities
BR G	We both take tests to get into college, the amount of time we spend in university is the same (except for courses such as medicine and law), and the high school is pretty much focused on preparing the students to get into college
BR M	When we were talking about what our family says about education, AM student said that his family always said to him that education is very important, just like my family says too. Students finish high school around 17 years old, in both countries. Besides that, they think that college is very expensive, and I think that too

Their first contact was very positive as they mention “sweet people” and “very patient” to describe their international peers. They felt included and a sense of belonging, and this feeling fostered the success of international learning.

American students also provided their feedback after the session by answering a variety of questions as stated below.

Overwhelmingly, each American student shared that the things they were most concerned about did not come true. They were provided the opportunity to be

fearless in this collaboration of which many didn't believe they would be able to handle. However, the first meeting was extremely successful, giving students a confidence boost to do it again. Students from both Brazil and America were energized by this first meeting. Their vigor and excitement to continue this experience permeated our regular class hours respectively. Students asked for more meetings and sessions with their new peers.

At the second meeting with the Brazilian and American students, the professors shared their experience using storytelling. Each professor shared their personal journey through higher education, what they expected it to be like, and the realities that they encountered. After modeling the conversation, professors created small groups for students to share their own journey through education, their expectations, and the realities they have encountered thus far. Student responses to the questions *What do your friends and family say about education/college? Do they encourage you to go? Do they discourage you? Why or why not? What are the similarities of education in both countries? and Why did you choose to go to college?* represent their summary of the experience during our second meeting (Chart 2.3).

Both groups have realized similarities and differences in the educational system between countries. This helped raise cultural awareness and develop intercultural competence. As for Brazilian students, they shared facts that called their attention such as the concept of private and public schools, extracurricular activities, entrance exam tests, and courses length.

Chart 2.4 presents the AM comments, as follows.

By the second meeting with each other, students were more comfortable discussing their ambition and desire to attend higher education. They expressed many

**Chart 2.4** American feedback during second session

AM C	In Brazil, they do not have to necessarily pay for college if they pass a test at the end of the year; if they do not pass that test, they can either attend to a private college, which they must pay for, or they can wait until the next year and take the test again. What is similar between here and Brazil is that teachers are undervalued and underpaid for. One thing that stood out the most to me was that college is free for them
AM K	The education system in Brazil is a lot different than the education system in America. In Brazil, they have private and public colleges as do we, but in Brazil, the public colleges are free. As for me, I'm going to be in debt for a long time just by going to a community college. In Brazil, you need to take a test to get into college and get a passing grade on it. You want to score the highest you can because you are in competition with everyone around you who also wants to get into college. In comparison to here, where anyone can go to college at a certain cost. What stood out to me was that your high school GPA doesn't matter for the test. But for most college in America, you need to have a good high school GPA to be accepted to their school. Also, what stood out to me was when we were discussing the amount of support, we get from our families most of them said their parents didn't want them to become teachers because they don't get paid enough and they are undervalued. That is very similar to how most teachers are viewed in America
AM L	Brazil is very different in education and how things are done. Some similarities are that both have many opportunities and have many different things. We all talked about how college gets a bad reputation and how everyone makes it seem like it's 100% work all the time and no time for anything else. It just made me realize that we all have different goals and different reasons on why we want to attend college

similarities in their motivations from familial pressure to the need to be successful as an adult. Students throughout this session were more vulnerable as they shared their fears of letting their families down. They talked about the joy that their families had when they were admitted to college and how they hope to hold on to those happy moments when they begin to struggle in college.

Brazilian students who were well into their second year of college also provided words of wisdom to their American peers who were only in the early stages of their higher-education journey. Students were warned to avoid procrastination and to pick the right friends. Brazilian and American students also discussed holding on to their dreams and to not allow difficulty to get in the way of their goals.

At this point of the collaboration, the professors were well into weeks of collaboration and meetings. Our role as instructors shifted to more listening and less facilitating because the students were taking the reins. Students were engaging in deep conversation touching on some issues that affect them and the impact they hope to have on the world.

For the third session, students were asked to choose a social problem and engage in discussion to how they, their peers, and people around them were affected by it. Chart 2.5 shares Brazilian students' reports.

The comments here, even shy, show unemployment and climate change as their chosen social problems in the collaborative discussion. It is important to highlight that critical thinking skills were expected in this activity, but as mentioned before, Brazilian students did not have a high level of English proficiency as it can also be seen in their writing. Even if the instruction was to write in either Portuguese or English, many chose to do it in the foreign language, and those are the comments brought to this study. Overall, their bravery to do so is already a huge achievement as expressing in the written modality of language is a great step for English learners. The collaboration opened up the opportunity for us to boost the self-esteem of our learners, which is crucial for their well-being and future endeavors.

By the end of this session, students were engaging in deep conversation while drawing from their previous educational training on topics. While they were learning from one another, we found that some students were also teaching each other.

**Chart 2.5** Brazilian feedback during third session

BR F	Unemployment is something that exist in the whole world, so everybody should discuss about it and try to find solutions. In the pandemic, the number of unemployed people had increased, because a lot of people were fired and couldn't find another job, as the companies in general were afraid to hire people and have to fire them right after because of the uncertainty of how much this pandemic would last
BR AL	Lots of young people graduate in high school or do some vocational course in the hope to get a job right after, but they don't. There're a lot of reasons why the unemployment do exist, and there are a lot of other social problem linked to this. People strive to have a good curriculum in intention to be hired as soon as possible, but jobs are hard to find
BR A	Everyone suffers with climate change. Right now, we have snow in Brazil and 50° degrees celcius in Canada, and it's just an outcome of our everyday actions. So this problem affects every living being on the planet

Often students would share articles, their own completed projects and other items in the chat for other students to review.

Chart 2.6 shows AM students' comments on the social problem they chose in their group work.

Embarking on the second to last in person class meeting, we found that students were attending both the morning and evening sessions, though students were only expected to attend one session a day, so that they may have more time talking with their peers. Students also began to turn their cameras on and show their pet dogs and cats.

It became tradition for a Brazilian student to turn their mic on so that the class could hear the church bells signaling the start of the group discussion. The chat box became full of curious questions and comments about Zoom profile pictures and best movies to watch. By this class session, students did not want it to end. Each class began to run over five, ten, and sometimes fifteen minutes past our usual meeting time. Students shared their thoughts about the experience after that class below (Chart 2.7).

The positive experience is registered in the Brazilian students' sharing both in our synchronous sessions and in writing. The international experience provided

**Chart 2.6** American feedback during third session

AM A	The social problem we focused on was education. We discussed that a lot because its confusing/amazed that if you pass an admission test, you can go to college for free. We chose this social problem because I feel like many people were intersted on how their education works compared to our education here. To me, it means a lot because I feel it's useful information to learn about how education differs from other counties. It effects everyone who chooses to go to college because its a big decision to decide to go into student loan debts and be in debt for a while in your lifetime. It effects my life because me and people's lives around me by possibly creating student loan debt for me and my family would maybe help me pay for these loans, and I feel it would affect my determination to finish college so I don't waste money, and it is useful to help me become sucessful in my eyes
AM M	I brought up women's rights, which then escalated to our social topic, equality. We chose this problem because it's a current ongoing issue, which has been going on for centuries. It means a lot to me because there are so many different topics that make up equality as a whole. The most prevalent thing that I can think of was that most of my group is made up of women, and especially in Brazil, women's rights are still a problem. There will always be people who treat others wrongfully just because they're seen as "different," so no matter how you look at it, everyone is treated wrongfully at some point in their lives. Thus why we chose this topic; it's a huge problem that needs to be solved
AM T	The social project that I wanted to focus on was poverty and homelessness. My group came to the same conclusion as me. I chose this issue because I already did a project on homelessness for my government/economics class in twelfth grade. The subject was fresh in my mind, so I hoped to share my thoughts on it. Some of my peers stated that their families had a low income; while not being on the cusp of poverty, it is still a constant issue. In terms of the people who live around me specifically, homelessness is an urgent problem that must be dealt with immediately

**Chart 2.7** Brazilian feedback during fourth session

BR Students	Write about your experience, and remember to share something positive and also something you learned. Provide suggestions of what we can do better if necessary
G	The fourth day experience was really cool because I got the chance to talk to (...), and I really liked her. We all agreed that it would be great to have another experience just to get to know each other better, to share our tastes, and to become friends. In general, the collaboration made me realize I need to practice more my speaking and listening skills, and it brought me joy because I could talk to native speakers
C	My experience at the telecollaboration was amazing; they shared a lot of good things, about their school, haha. They've said that we wake up very early to have classes; we said too about what singers do we like. I said that I like so much of American singers and a girl, for now I can't remember her name. She said that she likes our country and our music; I think they like of something new, and we are new for them, we learned about their culture, and they've learned about our country too
N	My experience was really good. I had never talked with native speakers, so this was a new thing for me. I think I could learn a little more about their culture, and now I'm more confident to talk in English. I wish that we could have talked more freely about ourselves to be able to know each other on a personal level. I honestly liked this experience, and I hope to have more opportunities to do it again

them with some self-evaluation perspectives as well when they pointed out what they could have done differently or what they aim to do.

Having some real conversations with their partners and working collaboratively made them feel a part of a significant learning process in English. Brazilian student G also said that the experience brought her joy. This fact also brought joy to educators as they realized that all the time invested in planning the COIL was really worth it and highly impacted the students.

Chart 2.8 presents the American students' comments.

The group project showed us as instructors that our students already understood the value in collaboration. Students were providing solutions to social issues that were timely and showed that students began to develop critical thinking skills and team building skills throughout the summer collaboration. Some students also showed a high degree in applying previous knowledge to the contemporary global context by mentioning projects they completed in high school and assignments they were working on in their summer class with EOP. What was more remarkable and important as an instructor was the ways in which our young, college aged adults recognized the faults in our society and had creative, forward-thinking plans to ensure an equitable future.

**Chart 2.8** American feedback during fourth session

AM Student	Write about your experience, and remember to share something positive and also something you learned. Provide suggestions of what we can do better if necessary
M	I personally like our solution of teaching young children how to treat people the correct way. When children tend to soak up more information and will tend to model behavior that they're shown. I like how we all came up with some sort of a solution and shared with each other, everyone participated equally, and it was really nice. Like I've said before, I absolutely love this class, so participating in the project was a lot of fun, and all of the topics the Brazil students brought up were very interesting! (in one word) amazing. (I would like to) create better bonds with everyone and get to know them better. Waking up so early...and the discussion boards. It's not that I minded them; it's just that I had a hard time remembering about them
A	Teaching people to treat others how they would want to be treated. Everyone kind of put their thoughts in, and it was nice to hear from them. Awesome experience. I wish we had time to learn their language and culture from them more. I wish we didn't have to answer these discussion boards if I'm being honest
I	The solution was to just talk to one another; the experience was good, it was nothing too out of control. The group dynamic was that there was one talkative person, and everyone would just add on to what she was saying. It was kind of interesting and fun at the same time, but at the end, everyone got together and did everything smoothly. My experience was chill, and one thing I wish I had time to do is visit Brazil; one thing I wish I didn't have to do is turn in my camera

## 2.5 Conclusion

This collaboration between Jefferson Community College (SUNY COIL) and UNESP (BRaVE) is necessary for all students because we want our students to thrive. We want them to experience all that there is in higher education, and that includes global learning. Our students, despite coming from extremely diverse backgrounds, benefit from global learning in many different ways: from engaging in soft skill development, enhancing their viewpoint on the world and their place in it, to directly impacting their self-motivation and interest in higher education. Higher education is fundamentally interested in educating global citizens who can and will make a positive impact on the world.

This collaboration started with a small idea. Opportunities to provide students with global learning by utilizing technology instead of traveling seemed far-fetched. After finding a community of people who understood the vision and the urgency to provide students with this opportunity, we found that what seemed to be a small idea has grown into a collaboration of creative minds invested in making a large impact on the student experience, learning, and programs.

The collaboration was not easy. Merging teaching styles, adjusting to student needs, and concerns throughout the weeks was challenging. The true planning began when we were paired. We had to quickly set the foundation of getting to know each other just as our students had to adjust during their classes. We spent multiple meetings getting to know each other, exchanging cultural experiences and discussing the similarities. After hours of sharing details about our personal lives and academic journey, we dived into developing a course that flowed nicely with our already designed course to synchronous Fridays. We needed to engage our students during

regular class sessions and weaving the global learning component throughout the course. This prepared students for the live meeting every week.

This collaboration was an immense success that cannot be quantified. Our students, despite proficiency level, engaged in meaningful dialogue about their education and what drives them to their degree programs and to college overall. Remarkably, our students found themselves with similar familial motivations and economic motivations. Many of our Brazilian and American students saw higher education as the vehicle to freedom from the cycle of poverty. Very quickly, around week 2, they found that they were more similarities than differences and that revelation is what made this collaboration extremely successful. Students found through global learning and conversation that despite being many miles away, they can find commonality and exchange in meaningful discord with people across the globe. This is the start of global citizenship and community.

One of the concerns that was overwhelming during this collaboration was that students would not enjoy the experience because it was virtual. In the midst of the pandemic, many educators were dreading the challenge of keeping students engaged through a camera. The professors put that fear completely to the side and jumped headfirst into this experience. What we found is that while some students took more from the experience than others did, not one of the students regretted it. Just as no one would ever say, studying abroad was a big mistake of their academic career. COIL can be something that sticks with students forever or be an anchor that reminds them of their wonderful college experience. Students who participated in this collaboration today feel limitless. They are seeing that despite their background, nothing is out of reach including one day studying or traveling abroad. Greetings from São Paulo, Brazil, and New York, United States.

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