CALL FOR PROJECTS FOR

VIRTUAL EXCHANGES / COIL

Collaborative Online International Learning

JUNE 2022

Direction
Relations internationales

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1. Context

The COVID-19 crisis has had a major impact on the international activities of universities and has led them to rethink certain aspects of their internationalisation strategy, in particular by integrating the dimension of digitalisation but also sustainability.
Even if we are glad to observe a willingness to resume exchange semesters abroad for the various benefits they represent, the health crisis has impacted and is still impacting students' behaviour with regards to exchanges, with for instance more carefulness when planning an exchange. What so ever, this context calls for innovation.

In this ongoing pandemic context, many universities have offered the possibility to their students and to students of partner institutions to follow their courses remotely, but these virtual mobility experiences only represent a partial solution to traditional exchanges, both from a pedagogical point of view and from a perspective of internationalization (limited social, linguistic and cultural immersion experience). Far from becoming the main teaching format at UNIL, it is undeniable that digitisalisation is taking an increasing place in teaching; this is being taken into account in the institution's international policy, hence this second call for projects aiming at the development of real virtual exchanges, also called *Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)*, and going beyond putting traditional courses online.

2. Virtual exchanges / COIL: definition

We speak of *virtual exchanges* or *COIL* in reference to online courses centered on inter-university collaboration, both between faculty members and between students, enriched by the approaches and experiences of each, and including an intercultural dimension. Unlike the concept of *virtual mobility*, *virtual exchanges / COIL* consist of joint courses set up between faculty members from two (or more) universities and forming part of the course offerings of each institution. This allows students to live an experience of internationalization at home in a context of uncertainty that impacts stays abroad. Such courses cannot replace the added value of a full semester abroad, but nevertheless allow a form of international experience.

3. Objective of the call for projects

The International Relations office (IRO) is launching this second call for projects in collaboration with the UNIL Center for Teaching and Learning (CSE) with the aim of funding around ten projects that can start in the spring or fall semester 2023. The objective is not to offer new courses, but to modify the format of certain existing courses by offering them in the format of *virtual exchange / COIL* between two or more universities. The possibility of creating a new course in a COIL format is also possible but is not a prerequisite.

The proposed projects could either aim at strengthening existing partnerships or at developing new collaborations demonstrated as strategic by the project leaders. The target audience can be at BA or MA level (undergraduate or graduate depending on the country of the partner institution).

Due to the differences in the academic calendar between institutions, it may not be possible to carry out all the course sessions in virtual exchange mode (COIL), but it is important to

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plan for a significant part of the student's workload in a virtual mode (interactions between students and teachers of the two institutions, distance group work, etc.). Teachers are also requested to take into account practical elements such as time change, language of instruction or the partner's IT infrastructure when developing their project.

Insofar as collaboration between students and teachers from different institutions is at the heart of the educational project, the benefits of such teaching will be numerous:

- Confrontation with other pedagogical approaches
- Enrichment by the contribution of students bringing new perspectives
- Learning to collaborate at a distance with students from other backgrounds
- Experience of interculturality
- Development of language skills

4. Eligibility

To be eligible, a project must be carried out by at least two applicants, one from each partner institution. All disciplines are eligible.

At UNIL, the main applicant must be a member of Professorial Staff, Senior Lecturer (MER), or Lecturer (Maître Assistant·e). At the partner institution(s), the main applicant must be a member of the academic staff. The partner institution must be an accredited university.

The agreement in principle of the dean's office or of the head of the curriculum on the teaching of the course at UNIL in virtual exchange / COIL format is necessary at the project submission stage. A similar procedure in the partner institution, at department, faculty or university level, is required. Financial, technical or pedagogical support from the partner institution, faculty, unit or structure concerned will be considered an asset at evaluation stage.

5. Funding arrangements

It is planned to finance a maximum of ten projects with a budget of CHF 10,000 each. This support will allow the hiring of a student assistant (for up to a maximum of CHF 5,000) and the equivalent of CHF 5,000 in services by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CSE) 'in kind' to support the projects. The CSE service package includes:
- Pedagogical support of the project by a pedagogical advisor (the advisor will document the experience in order to showcase the faculty members' investment)
- A Hackathon organised at the beginning of the project to define the pedagogical scenario
- 1 video promoting the project
- 5 content videos

Support for the project begins with the launch Hackathon and continues until the end of the targeted semester.

6. Evaluation

A selection committee will be composed of members of the Rectorate and peer researchers who will proceed to rank project applications.

The evaluation criteria are as follows:
- Added value and purpose of the virtual exchange/COIL format compared to standard teaching
- Relevance of the proposed teaching methods
- Quality of the partnership, contribution and complementarity of the partner(s)
- Feasibility of the project
- Sustainability of the project at a later stage
- Prospects for further development
- Methods of promoting the project (internal / external communication)

7. Calendar

- Launch of the call: **1st June 2022**
- **16 June 2022, 11:30-12:30**: online information session for future project leaders. Zoom link to participate: https://unil.zoom.us/j/2033891670
- **From June to the end of August**, **by appointment if wished**: advisory interview with a representative of the CSE and the IRO
- Deadline for submission of applications: **30 September 2022, midnight**
- Announcement of results: **end of October 2022**
- Implementation of projects: **spring semester 2023 or autumn semester 2023-24**
- The Hackathon mentioned in the CSE's services will be organised in November 2022 for the selected projects starting in spring 2023 (the precise date will be communicated later) and in early June 2023 for the projects starting in autumn 2023.

8. Submission of the application

The application must be submitted by the UNIL applicant using the online form available at: https://unil-submission.unil.ch/fr/

The application form must be accompanied by the following two annexes:
- a letter of intent signed by a representative of the partner institution(s)
- a letter of support from the Dean's Office or the person in charge of the curriculum at UNIL (provided template).

Without these documents, the application will not be considered.
The application must be submitted by 30 September 2022 at the latest.

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9. Reporting and regulations for use

- The budget granted is paid by the IRO into an account dedicated to the project in the faculty concerned for the hiring of the student assistant.

Successful candidates undertake to respect the following points in the context of the projects supported:
- Respect the conditions of employment and work rate of the student-assistant
- At the end of the semester during which the course was held, write a report on the project, its added value, evolution and results. This may be based on the report written by the CSE's educational advisor.
- Acknowledge the support given to the project in any publication or presentation resulting directly from the project;
- Accept that the authorities of the partner universities may refer to the supported project in their communication (website, documents, etc.).

10. Contacts

At the International Relation Office (IRO) : Erasmus@unil.ch
At the Center for Teaching and Learning : CSE@unil.ch

11. Literature

- COIL Faculty Guide (first published by the SUNY COIL Center, modified by Coilconsult/Jon Rubin) (Creative Commons Licence)
  https://www.unil.ch/files/live/sites/international/files/-New_Website/Temporaire/COIL/1_coil_guide.pdf

- Internationalization in Action (ACE), Connecting Classrooms: Using Online Technology to Deliver Global Learning (this seems to be copyrighted, so please don't distribute)
  https://www.unil.ch/files/live/sites/international/files/-New_Website/Temporaire/COIL/2_Connecting-Classrooms-Using-Online-Technology-to-Deliver-Global-Learning.pdf

- Designing and Implementing Virtual Exchange, A Collection of Case Studies (Creative Commons Licence)
  https://www.unil.ch/files/live/sites/international/files/-New_Website/Temporaire/COIL/3_ED609252.pdf

- 2020: the year of virtual mobility, Michael Gaebel, European University Association
  https://eua.eu/resources/expert-voices/182:2020-the-year-of-european-virtual-mobility.html