



Selection Committee  
Ralph Stair Prize in Innovative Education  
Office of Faculty Development and Advancement  
Florida State University

March 4, 2021

Dear Selection Committee Members:

As faculty members in the International Affairs program, we are honored to be nominated for the Ralph Stair Prize in Innovative Education. Herein, we will elaborate on two innovative programs we developed, explaining the innovation, the success of the practice and its impact on FSU students and beyond. These programs help students gain critical thinking skills, develop problem solving approaches to complex problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and help them become interculturally competent, globally aware, and respectful of the needs of diverse populations of all kinds.

**Innovation 1: Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Partnership  
Florida State University – Fatec Technical Colleges, Brazil**

The COIL partnership between Florida State University's Global Citizenship Certificate program and the Fatec Technical Colleges in Brazil was initiated in fall 2019. The pilot project was co-developed by us and faculty from Fatec in its Americana campus in São Paulo to facilitate students communicating and learning from one another. The partnership was extended to Fatec São Caetano and Fatec Praia Grande campuses in fall 2020. Since its inception, students at both institutions connected virtually, collaborated throughout the semester via video conferencing and engaged in authentic intercultural and global learning. Around 60-80 students benefit from this partnership every semester.

***Who benefits from this program?*** Undergraduate students enrolled in IDS 2431: Global Perspectives are automatically enlisted for the COIL partnership. IDS 2431 is the required course for Global Citizenship Certificate (GCC). However, not all sections of the course are restricted to the GCC. Therefore, students from any undergraduate program in FSU can be part of the COIL partnership. Some popular majors taking this course include business, international affairs, and pre-med.

***Fit with GCC, FSU Liberal Studies and Strategic Plan:*** The GCC is an academic certificate program where students build cross-cultural skills and global competencies and complement them with real-world spaces to apply these skills. In IDS 2341, students learn about intercultural communication theories, and a variety of global and cross-cultural issues. They also practice active learning by completing problem solving activities in and outside of the classroom. The course encourages students to be critical, flexible and analytical thinkers, effective inter-cultural communicators, and culturally conscious participants in their communities. COIL partnership provides a hands-on, exciting, robust, and sustainable way of developing these skills, connecting with the several goals of the FSU Liberal Studies. Most importantly, COIL is a collaborative and innovative way to also connect with the different parts of the FSU Strategic Plan, specifically Goal



3. Lastly, COIL helps students develop key career readiness competencies identified by the [National Association of Colleges and Employers](#).

**COIL structure:** Each partnership lasts an entire semester. Faculty from Fatec and FSU meet prior to the start of a semester (fall or spring) to intentionally align the course objectives and goals. This is done by a) shared pedagogical approach to teaching and aligning the teaching materials covered in both classes and b) preparing common set instructions for FSU and Fatec students in English and Portuguese for students to have the same expectations from the partnerships. Once the semester starts, two students from FSU are matched with two students in Fatec. Students contact their teams through WhatsApp messaging app and set a time to meet. During these meetings, students use the discussion guides FSU-Fatec professors provide them. A total of four contacts take place each with a specific learning objective, separate discussion guide and a reflective assignment that follows such discussion. The fourth contact is devoted to students preparing a collaborative project demonstrating what they learned from each other throughout the semester.

**Assessment of student learning:** After each contact, students complete an assignment reflecting on their conversation with their Brazilian partners. These papers are evaluated for displays of ethnocentric thinking (e.g. “they have it really bad with COVID-19, not like us”) and ethnorelative thinking (e.g. “in the U.S. and Brazil, mask compliance has been hard to achieve”). The last writing assignment is a research paper where students must provide research-based context by linking the theory learned in the classroom to their interpersonal experiences.

**Key contributions and student reception:** Data collected from students completing the COIL partnership showed an appreciation of the partnership, and a reflection of the effort needed to have effective intercultural relationships. In that way, the objectives of the partnership were met. Some examples include:

Student 1, Section 1, IDS 2431, spring 2020: *“During my correspondence with my Brazilian counterparts, I learned a great deal about how different our two worlds are. My experience in the COIL program has helped expand my understanding and appreciation for other cultures. Because of this program, I am better able to recognize differences between my culture and the cultures of others while embracing these differences at the same time.”*

Student 2, Section 3, IDS 2431, fall 2020: *“I think this has really helped me to understand other cultures. Specifically, I now have a much more nuanced world view when it comes to people from different cultures. I am better able to see why some of our behaviors are different and why others are similar. I think it has also given me a greater appreciation of how other cultures live and interact with the world.”*

Student 3, Section 1, IDS 2431, fall 2020: *“I learned that I myself was a victim of ethnocentrism, that I just assumed that things I did here in the States were exactly as people did in Brazil, but their lifestyle and ways of doing things are sometimes totally different. I for the first time got to really speak and learn about cross-cultural differences with a “penpal”, and now that I have Ana’s number, I’m sure we will stay in contact for a long time!”*



## **Innovation 2: Diversity Talks Podcast**

Our second innovation involves a production and distribution of a podcast centered around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and intercultural competence. The Diversity Talks podcast is a part of the FSU initiative to celebrate the diversity we have on our campus and is enabled by the President's Diversity and Inclusion mini grant which we received in December 2019. All episodes bring forward the voices of DEI leaders on FSU campus who create a more inclusive culture for under-represented groups. By focusing on people who work on diversity and inclusion related issues in their professions, we create a dialogue around current issues, generate new ways to view the world and connect listeners with their own communities and beyond.

***Celebrating diversity at FSU:*** The collaborative and innovative approach of our project connects with different parts of the FSU Strategic Plan, specifically Goal 3. Each episode centers around a particular theme and having a conversation with someone who represents diversity in some shape or form. By listening to each guest, the audience can learn to leverage DEI in their own spaces and connect these issues with a larger community. It offers incredible potential to help us build and foster a rich learning environment for all of our students, staff and faculty by allowing participants to learn from the diversity and inclusion leaders. The quality and depth of these interactions can spark a conversation to create a fertile environment for problem-solving, promote interaction and understanding among students of all backgrounds and cultures; and help us build a stronger FSU community. This podcast also helps bridge the gap between DEI and global and intercultural competence as laid out in the FSU strategic plan.

***An educational tool:*** Each episode is accompanied by a learning goal, a list of discussion questions and freely available resources for easy integration into a lesson plan or a workshop. It creates a pathway for researchers, teachers, practitioners, students, and community members to engage with audiences beyond their reach and talk about their work in an accessible way. While students enrolled in our courses can listen to the podcast and reflect on its lessons through reflection papers, our project's reach is much wider. The podcast has been promoted widely at [FSU](#) and in the greater Tallahassee community by [WCTV](#), [WFSU](#), [Tallahassee Democrat](#) and [ABC-27](#).

***Key contributions and reception:*** Since its release on February 8, the two episodes have been heard by over 300 listeners, engaging with FSU students, faculty and staff as well as the greater Tallahassee community and beyond. Podcasting makes communication very easy between educators, practitioners, students and community members. Primarily targeted as a learning tool, it is also an important pathway for researchers, teachers, practitioners, students and community members to engage with audiences beyond their reach and talk about their work in an accessible way. The innovative approach of our project lies in its power to delve into tough topics, educate ourselves and our communities and take steps to become valuable in the diversity and inclusion space.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Elçin Haskollar and Dr. Tanu Kohli Bagwe  
Global Citizenship Certificate