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International Virtual Academic Collaboration
OWL – Edmonton (Alberta), Canada

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Edmonton (Alberta, Canada) – OWL
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9 Teaching Projects

Matching
Kick-Off-Event
Design Coaching and Workshops
Community of Practice
Assessment of Collaborations
Mobility
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Overall, students "enjoyed connecting with students around the world" and appreciated the intercultural exchange facilitated by the collaboration with Bielefeld.

First step exposure of students to studying abroad with fostering of interest for future in-person and/or longer duration study abroad opportunities

Several noted the need for trust in learning teams and ensuring psychological safety where non-English speakers were hesitant to express views because of perceived limitations of vocabulary. Canadian students also discussed their new discovery that they speak quickly and realized the need to ensure understanding by others.

Potential of life-long friendships and connections of participating students

Students clearly appreciated having different instructors who brought different perspectives to the course material. Most of all, Canadian students appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with German students in carrying out various class activities and their micro-teaching project.
Voices: Students

Truly authentic experience working with someone from a different country. I have been telling everybody about this course.

I liked working with both the Canadian students and German students together as a group. We had a very good time and it was a very interesting experience. I also liked the Canadian perspective to the tasks/topics.

My favorite part was having the opportunity to interact with the German students and professors. As a future language teacher, having the perspectives of students from other countries is crucial. I find it fascinating how we can complete a university course completely remotely and with people from two geographical locations! Great course :).
It also gave me a lot of new ideas for materials and activities that I can incorporate into my future teaching. I foresee that the collaboration will result in lasting interaction and collaboration.”

“I think international virtual collaborations are an excellent way to revitalize a course or one’s teaching practice. It is also an excellent way to form professional partnerships and even friendships with university instructors in another country.”

International cooperation enables you to learn new content from others, but at the same time, you learn to expand your own (limited) perspectives.”
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May
**Tools for the digital classroom**
with Eleni Louloudi

June
**Assessment of Collaborative Courses**
with Prof. Anna Lena Rademaker and Prof. Susan Sommerfeldt

September
**Funding Opportunities, Research and Teaching Collaborations**
with John Paul Kleiner, DAAD Toronto

November
**Lessons Learned**
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Program:

Part 1 – Let’s Meet
Kick-off-Event

Part 2 – Getting to know each other
in Breakoutsessions

Part 3 – All about Germany and Canada
Quiz in Breakoutsessions

Part 4 – Getting to know OWL
Interview with a Canadian student that has been in OWL

Part 5 – Getting to know Alberta
Interview with a German student that has been in Alberta

Part 6 – Final Session
Jam Session with the musician Sam Vance-Law

Intercultural exchange, peer-to-peer-learning, regional knowledge
For Students in Alberta and OWL
Voices: Students

What did you like or love about the DSE?

The fact that I got to hear about other peoples different experiences. Even if I may not be there to live it with them through an in person exchange, this digital method allows for me to imagine it much more strongly thanks to all of us students engaging with input. So, it was indeed worthwhile :)

Please keep up the Digital exchange because it is indeed a very good and especially affordable and less scary option to "see the world" or rather at least: Canada and Germany.
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• Started in September with an Infosession
• Matching: students were grouped in three/four students per group

E-Tandem
Direct cultural exchange and potentially life-long friendships
For students in Alberta and OWL
Voices: Students

Our first meeting was fun, we talked about how we will organize our meetings. I’m really looking forward to the next meeting with the two girls.

The E-Tandem has been going great for me! I enjoyed chatting with Sarah and Lisa very much and learned a lot about Bielefeld and German culture. We also keep the WhatsApp texts entirely in German so that’s good practice for me, I’ve started sending German audio instead of texting to practice my spoken German.

We are doing very well and started communicating via WhatsApp. We have talked a lot and we really like each other already, since we are all very open and like-minded people. We have also already made plans for the time when I (German student) come to visit Canada. Now, we have decided to have a weekly talk where everyone talks about what’s going on in their lives. So I am very happy and I’m looking forward into growing our friendship!
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Outlook

Video Alberta-OWL

Mobility

More collaborative courses and ongoing collaboration of the lecturers
Thank you!
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About the project: www.uni-bielefeld.de/we-can-virtuowl