



THE UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA
The University for National Unity



Studies in the Comparative Economic and Social History of West Africa COIL Module, Spring 2024

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History 111 [001 35343] History of Africa
Mon/Wed 10:45am-12:00pm
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In-person, synchronous

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In-person, synchronous

In this 10-week collaboration, 30 QC students and 30 UniAbuja students came together to explore the economic and social history of West Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We began with icebreakers as a large group, followed by introductions and asynchronous team-building exercises. Next, each student submitted a 2-6 page paper responding to their team's research prompt and readings. For the final project, all 10 teams produced 3-6 minute videos outlining their team's findings, with one American and one Nigerian speaking for each group. Students also posted responses to the videos of other teams. Finally, students helped the instructors plan a virtual zoom class party to debrief and to celebrate their COIL experience. Overall, students overcame the 5-hour time difference and other challenges to complete their projects, discovering commonalities across cultures and forging new friendships.

Technologies: WhatsApp, Slack, Zoom, YouTube, and Blackboard

COIL Module Learning Objectives

- Students will gain insight into the lives, learning environments, and perspectives of students living in another country
- Students will gain greater awareness of global interconnections as well as differences
- Students will improve their digital proficiency, online communication skills, and oral presentation skills through synchronous and asynchronous assignments and presentations
- Students will demonstrate intercultural competence when engaging positively, productively, and professionally within international online groups
- With their international peers, students will co-create informative and analytical content
- Rather than treating analytic terms in the Social Sciences and the Humanities as if they are natural, neutral, and self-evident, students will show critical thinking skills by defining their analytic terms and categories, articulating the assumptions or background knowledge behind their own statements, and supporting analytic claims with examples from assigned materials

Activities, Deadlines, and Assessment of Student Work

	Activities and Student Assignments	Due by:	Points
Pre-COIL	Instructors explain COIL goals and Slack; share video introductions and overview of their campuses; pre-COIL student survey		
Week 1	(Icebreaker) Introduce your neighborhood/city with a photograph; Pre-COIL survey	Wed 11am ET/5pm NT	2
	Comments on 3 or more posts from Nigeria	Thurs 11am ET/5pm NT	3
Week 2	Introduce yourself! Respond to Adichie’s “Danger of a Single Story”	Tues 11am ET/5pm NT	3
	Comment on posts from Nigeria	Thurs 11am ET/5pm NT	2
Week 3	Guest Lecture and Assigned Readings	TBA	1
Week 4	Respond to “This Magnificent African Cake” and meet your team members	Tues 11am ET/5pm NT	2
	Respond to the posts of other students	Thurs 11am ET/5pm NT	1
	Break in COIL activities for Midterms		
Week 5	Guest Lecture and Assigned Readings	TBA	1
Weeks 6-8	COIL Projects	Thurs 12pm ET/5pm NT	7
	Respond to work by other students	Sat 12pm ET/Sat 5pm NT	3
Week 9	Students propose ideas for Class Party	TBA	
Week 10	Written Evaluations;	Tues 12pm ET/5pm NT	3
	Personal Reflection Video	Thurs 12pm ET/5pm NT	2
	Post-COIL student survey		
Total			30

Time Differences / Grading / Participation Policy

From Jan 22-March 10, Abuja was 6 hours ahead of New York. Starting March 10, Abuja was 5 hours ahead of New York. (NT = Nigeria Time; ET = Eastern Time). Student were assigned almost all the same tasks, with the same points. Prof Okeke graded UA students. Prof Davie graded QC students. QC students earned points by posting in Slack, with their international peers, then posting again in Blackboard. Students in both courses were expected to attend and actively participate in all course activities. Both instructors stipulated that more than two absences could lower the student’s participation grade.

Week 1: Icebreakers

Part 1: Take a photograph of a place in your neighborhood, on your campus, or in your city. Do not use an image from the internet and do not pick a well-known or iconic place (the Empire State Building, for example). Show a place that is important or meaningful to you, a scene that represents your community, or a spot you might want to show a visitor or a friend who has never been to your city/country. Tell us about the place and what makes it special. Start with a greeting and your name.

[Write 100-250 words about your photo/2 points]

Due date: Wed 31st January, 2024, 11am (Eastern Time: ET)/5pm (Nigerian Time: NT)

Part 2: Post comments on the photos of 3 of your international peers. Use the "Reply in Thread" feature. Look for the speech bubble icon. (UA students will post on photos by QC students; QC students will post on photos by UA students.) If possible, make sure all students receive comments. [3 points]

See the Dialogue Toolkit in [#general-welcome](#) for suggestions on how to offer thoughtful and substantive comments, as well as guidance on "netiquette."

Due date: Thurs Feb 1st, 2024 11am ET /5pm NT

Week 2: Self Introductions

Part I: Watch Chimamanda Adichie's 2009 Ted Talk, "The Danger of a Single Story." Think about her points and ask yourself if there is a "single story" about your culture, your neighborhood, your city, or your country that you feel is misleading or too simplistic.

Next, introduce yourself! Post a 3-minute video or a photograph of yourself. Make sure you are audible and visible if you are coming on camera. (If you do not want to appear on camera, use an avatar.) Start with a greeting, then tell us your name(s), where you are from, your major field of study, languages spoken, and anything else important for us to know about you (i.e. your social life, community/volunteer activities, career goals, family history, hobbies, or your favorite food, musician, or film).

Conclude by responding to Adichie's "Danger of a Single Story:" Is there a "single story" about you that you want people to reconsider? What stereotype about your country or culture would you ask your teammates, and our class, to think more critically about, and to be ready to reject or re-evaluate?

[150-300 words or roughly 3 minutes/3 points]

Due date: Tuesday February 6th, 2024, 11am ET/5pm NT

Part II: Respond to the introductions posted by your international peers.

Due date: Thursday Feb 8th, 2024 11am ET/5pm NT [2 points]

dream. From the election of the first African president to the current state of affairs, examples that demonstrate the gradual transition to a more equitable and just society. This is why I believe that this Online Collaboration is the best way to achieve our dream.

Screenshot_20240124-235251.png

week-2-self-introductions

IMG_4323

Message #week-2-self-introductions

Thread #week-2-self-introductions

Gianna Palumbo 7 days ago
Can you explain to me what a major in diplomacy is? I keep seeing people talk about it from Abuja, but I've never heard of it before

Sky To 7 days ago
we need to expand our boundaries and make our view on people more than just the cover of the book.

HASSAN MAHAMUD ADEIZA 7 days ago
Diplomacy is a course under the department of history and diplomatic studies. In some schools it is referred to as international relations. The term "diplomacy" refers to the practice of conducting international relations through dialogue, negotiation, and compromise, rather than through the use of force or coercion. Diplomacy is based on the belief that countries can resolve conflicts and build strong relationships by engaging in constructive dialogue and reaching mutual

IMG_2885.MOV

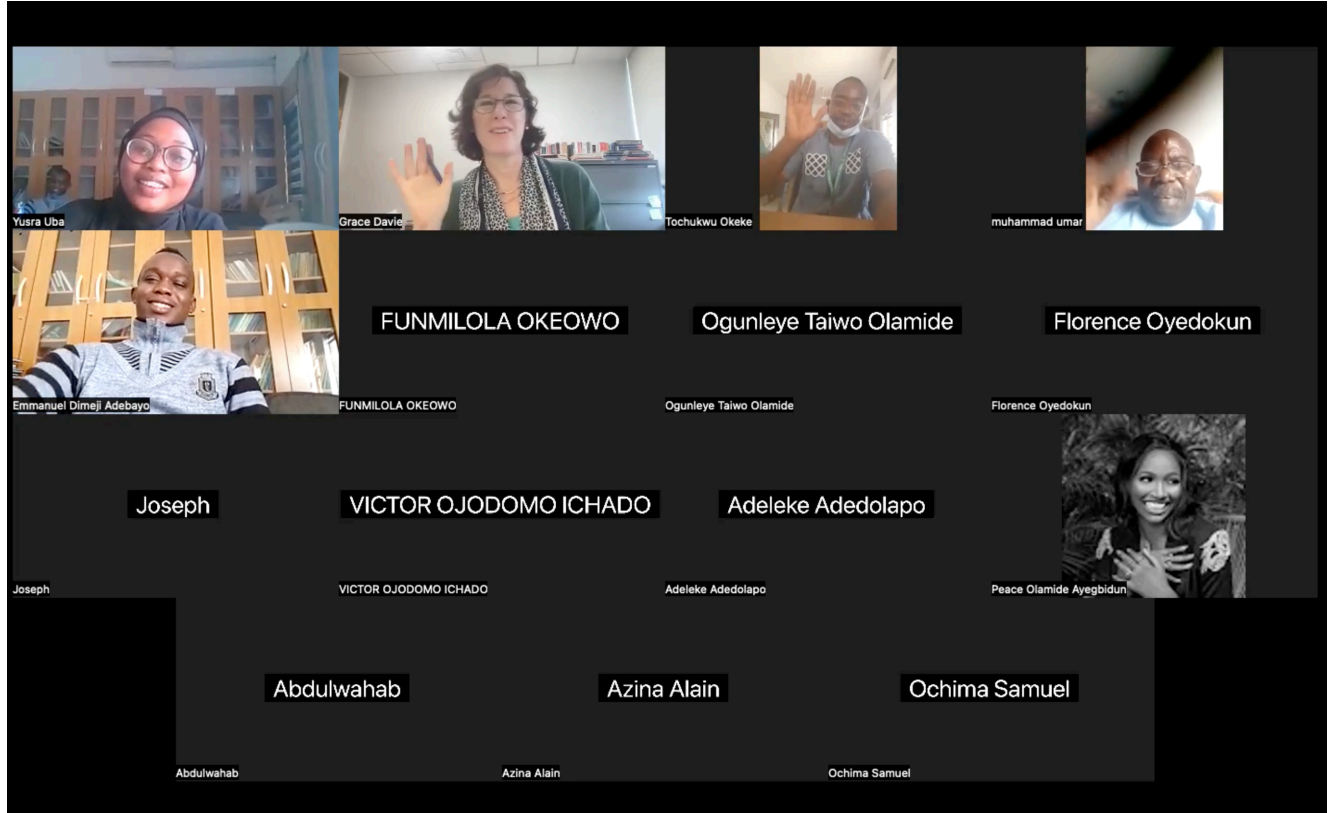
3:17

3:03

Hello guys, my name is Yusra Uba. I am a student in the Department of History at the University of Abuja.

Week 3: Guest Lecture by Prof Davie

Prof Davie gives synchronous lecture via Zoom to UniAbuja students on “Christian Missionaries in West Africa, 1850s-1880s.” Lecture is recorded and posted on Slack.



During Week 4, Profs Okeke and Davie create 10 teams with approximately 3 QC and 3 UA students each. Each team is given their own Slack channel. Students create new WhatsApp chats within their teams. Each group is asked to pick a new team name.

Week 4: Introduction to the Scramble for Africa

Part I: Watch Davidson’s “This Magnificent African Cake,”

Write/record a reflection on 1-2 specific parts of the film. What did you learn from the film about “the Scramble” that surprised you, or that you want to learn more about?

[100-300 words or 1-2 min video post; 2 points]

Due date: Wed 21 Feb 5pm ET / 11pm NT

Part II: Post comments on the work of 2 of your international peers. Use the "Reply in Thread" feature.

[2 points, Due Thurs 22 Feb 5pm ET /11pm NT]

Week 5: Guest Lecture by Prof Okeke

Prof Okeke gives synchronous online lecture via Zoom to QC students on “Europe and West Africa in Historical Contexts: Economic Encounters and Contemporary Realities.” Lecture posted on Slack.



Note: This was planned as a 7-week module. Flexibility with final project deadlines was necessary.

Weeks 6-8: Final Projects

Part I: Individual Contribution, 2-6 single (or double) spaced pages paper

In response to your team’s research assignment (see readings and prompts below) write a paper responding to your team’s prompt and share it with your teammates.

Each student’s “Individual Contribution” may have a somewhat different focus. Your individual research papers will enable your team to complete the final project as a group.

Format: Formal essay or bullet points. Analyze at least 3 examples, providing context, very brief quotations, or paraphrases, and your analysis. Use place names, dates, and details.

Indicate the author's last name and page number where you found the information when quoting or paraphrasing. Define any specialized terms. Proof-read your work. Include a Bibliography. You may discuss additional readings, not assigned to your team, after making good use of your assigned readings.

2-6 single (or double) spaced pages, not including Bibliography

[Originally due Monday, 11 March, 11am ET / 4pm NT [4 points]; *Deadline extended*]

Submit to your professor for grading, and upload to your Team’s Slack channel

Readings

Asiwaju, A. I. *West African Transformations: Comparative Impact of French and British Colonialism*. Lagos: Malthouse Press, 2001.

Berry, Sara S. *No Condition is Permanent: The Social Dynamics of Agrarian Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Chuku, Gloria. "Igbo Women and Political Participation in Nigeria, 1800-2005," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 42, no. 1 (2009): 81-103.

Craven, Matthew, "Between Law and History: The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and the Logic of Free Trade," *London Review of International Law*, 3, no 1 (2015): 31-59.

Falola, Toyin, "From Hospitality to Hostility: Ibadan and Strangers, 1830-1904," *The Journal of African History*, 26, no. 1 (1985): 51-68.

Falola, Toyin, "Neighbors at War: Conflicts over Boundaries in Colonial Nigeria," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 19 (2010): 1-22.

Flint, J. E. "Economic Change in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century." *History of West Africa, Vol II*. Edited by J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder. London: Longman, 1974.

Hargreaves, J. D. "The European Partition of West Africa," *History of West Africa, Vol II*. Edited by J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder. London: Longman, 1974.

Herbst, Jeffrey. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Lindsay, Lisa. "'No Need...To Think of Home'? Masculinity and Domestic Life on the Nigerian Railway, c. 1940-61." *Journal of African History* 39 (1998): 439-466.

Ochonu, Moses, "Conjoined to Empire: The Great Depression and Nigeria," *African Economic History* 34 (2006): 103-145.

van Allen, Judith. "'Sitting on a Man': Colonialism and the Lost Political Institutions of Igbo Women," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 6, no. 2 (1972): 165-181.

Shillington, Kevin, *History of Africa*, 4th Edition, select chapters

Prompts

Each team was given 1-2 prioritized readings. Additional texts were be considered optional. All of the readings below were made available in Slack, in the [#week-6-final-project](#) channel, as PDFs

Team 1: Explore the subject of “Economic and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century West Africa” using Flint’s “Economic Change in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century.” If you wish, you may also use Hargreaves, “The European Partition of West Africa” and/or Shillington.

Team 2: Analyze the theme of “Diplomacy, International Relations, and the 1884-85 Berlin Conference” using Michael Craven’s essay, “Between Law and History.” Explain this author’s main arguments. After that, this team may also wish to analyze the primary source: “The General Act of the Berlin Conference on West Africa, 26 February 1885;” Hargreaves’s essay, “European Partition;” and/or additional primary sources, such as the “Standard Niger Treaty.”

Team 3: Explain and analyze the “Indigénat System in French West Africa, 1880s-1950s.” This team will use Asiwaju’s essay “Control through Coercion: the indigénat regime in French West African administration til 1946.” In addition, other readings can be used. [Note: Asiwaju’s chapters are embedded within longer PDFs on Slack. Teams are only responsible for their assigned chapters]

Team 4: Explain and analyze “the Partition of West Africa and the Origins of British Indirect Rule, using Hargreaves, “The European Partition of West Africa.” After that, this group may also discuss Flint’s “Economic Change in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century” and selections from Lugard’s Dual Mandate, and other relevant sources.

Team 5: Compare and contrast examples of “Colonization and Resistance in West Africa, 1860s-1900” using A. I. Asiwaju’s essay “From Mono to the Niger: Dahomey, Yorubaland, Borgu and Benin in the Nineteenth Century.” In addition, other relevant sources may be cited and analyzed.

Team 6: Discuss “Changing Social Relations in Southwestern Nigeria, 1830s-1950s” in light of Toyin Falola’s two essays: “From Hospitality to Hostility: Ibadan and Strangers, 1830-1904,” as well as “Neighbours at War: Conflicts Over Boundaries in Colonial Nigeria.” Other sources may be used to supplement and contextualize.

Team 7: Analyze the history of “African Farmers in Ghana and Nigeria.” Explain the main arguments of historian Sara Berry in her book, *No Condition is Permanent* regarding cocoa production in West Africa in the colonial period, including “cocoa holdups.” After using Berry’s book, this group may bring in other relevant sources.

Team 8: Explain and analyze “Military Resistance and Protest Migrations in France’s African Colonies” using two essays by Asiwaju, “Armed Resistance: the Example of Ohori-Ije in French Dahomey” and “Protest Migrations: French West Africa with special reference to the Ivory Coast and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) up to 1945.” Compare and contrast.

Team 9: Explain and analyze the history of “The Great Depression and Protest Movements in Nigeria using Moses Ochonu’s “Conjoined to Empire: The Great Depression and Nigeria.” After discussing this author’s main arguments, this team could use Asiwaj’s “Nigeria under Colonial Rule.” Berry’s *No Condition is Permanent*, and other available readings.

Team 10: Explain and analyze the subject of “Gender, Protest Movements, and Social Change in Nigeria, 1890s-1960s” using two essays: Gloria Chuku’s “Igbo Women and Political Participation in Nigeria” and Lisa Lindsay’s “‘No Need to Think of Home:’ Masculinity and Domestic Life on the Nigerian Railway.” After that, other sources may be used as well.

NOTES TO STUDENTS: We understand the challenge of the 5 hour time difference, and the fact that students are fasting for Ramadan this month. Meeting times are limited. But, do not worry! These projects can proceed, even if the international teams cannot meet or speak as a group synchronously.

Part II: Team Video Presentations, 2-6 minutes

Group projects are always challenging. Given the 5/6 hour time difference, and other constraints, this assignment may be especially challenging. Nevertheless, strive for an equitable distribution of tasks, active participation by all members, professionalism, academic rigor, and timely submission of work.

As a team, identify the best examples and analysis provided in all the available Individual Contribution papers. Weave these together into a coherent narrative that summarizes your team’s research findings. You may do this with or without visual illustrations. One QC and one UA student will speak for each team.

It is strongly recommended that your team write a script in order to make videos lasting only 3 minutes.

Include the following information:

- Your team’s number and name
- Your revised title for your group’s presentation (i.e. “French Rule in West Africa”)
- Names (and pictures if you like) of all team members and their home campus
- Bibliography

Upload a video or link to #Week-6 channel by Sunday, 17 March, 2pm ET/ 7pm NT [3 points]

Part III: Respond to 3 Videos of your Classmates in the #Week-6 Channel

Watch all of the videos shared by your classmates. Next, post thoughtful, substantive comments on the work of at least three other teams. Use the “Reply in Thread” feature when posting. Go beyond compliments: How did the team provide a comparative analysis of West African history? What did you learn? What ideas did the team explain especially well? You may also debate, reflect, offer suggestions, raise questions for further research, or otherwise engage with research findings of your classmates.

Due Tuesday, 19 March 11am ET / 5pm NT; Write at least 50-100 words for each [3 points]

[Deadlines were extended]

QUEENS COLLEGE 

Gender Protest Movement & Social Change in Nigeria 1890s-1960s

Team Prosperity

Queens College, City University of New York, USA and University of Abuja, Nigeria



Team Neutron [7] - Colonialism in Africa: Men and Women's Politics Power in Nigeria Share





Students

Fernando Martinez
Queens College

Jillian Marino-Pantoja
Queens College

Mdega Aondona Henry
University of Abuja

Play (k)

4:40 / 5:11    

Part III: Respond to the Videos of 3 other teams

Post comments on the videos of your classmates [3 points total]

The screenshot shows a Slack channel interface. At the top, the browser address bar displays 'app.slack.com/client/T061NQT4GPR/C06FVSVFAN4?selected_team_id=T061NQT4GPR'. The channel name is 'week-6-final-project'. A video player is embedded, showing a document titled 'Team 9 Final Project 2.mp4' by Isabella Nunez. The document text is as follows:

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

Sir :

When your predecessor, the Right Honourable Colonel Oliver Stanley, visited the Gold Coast on his tour in West Africa in the autumn of 1943, the cocoa Farmers, through their own recognised Organisation known as the Farmers Committee of the Gold Coast, had an interview with him which continued for several hours. The Farmers at that time had the opportunity of discussing with Colonel Stanley in an intimate manner the various problems that confronted them in the operation of the cocoa industry, and especially the problems involved in the marketing of the crop before and during the war.

2. The Representatives of the Farmers pointed out to your predecessor the inadequacy of the existing institutions which the local Government had created and had charged with the responsibility of operating the entire economy.

The video player shows a 5:30 duration. Below the video, a comment thread is visible. The first comment is by Isabella Nunez (11 days ago) with a transcript link. Below it, Abdulwahab Muhammed (5 days ago) comments: 'Team 9 did an amazing job exploring the Great Depression in Nigeria. It's fascinating how they connected cocoa growing in Nigeria and Ghana, post-independence political instability, and the roots of corruption. Great job, Team 9.' M Sosa (5 days ago) replies: 'I've always loved learning about military-related things, so I enjoyed that section. Though of course there were disadvantages as you said, and I'm guessing overall they did not work out. I really'.

Week 9: Students help to plan Class Party

Via the COIL WhatsApp chat, student propose the format, day, and time of the final class party.

Based on student suggestions, instructors send the following invitations.

Students,

You are cordially invited to the first ever QC-UA Virtual Class Party!

Date and Format:
Synchronous Zoom
Thursday, 18 April
9-10am New York time
2-3pm Nigerian time

Come to the party prepared to give a “gift” to the entire class to show your appreciation and also to share more about yourself with your classmates. If time allows, all students will have 1-2 minutes to explain their gift and its meaning during the Zoom meeting.

Instructions: By Wed 17 April, 9pm ET/ 9pm NT, upload your gift to the #class-party-and-coil-debrief channel in Slack. Use “search all channels” to find this new channel.

Gifts can be almost anything! Plan to share something everyone in the class could enjoy in the months ahead, when students have finished their final exams and have more time to relax.

Gift Ideas:

Recommendations with links to your 3 favorite movies (new films, or old classics)
A favorite family recipe (with an instructional how-to-make video, if possible)
Links to your favorite comedians with their funniest material
Recommendations or links explaining your favorite novelists, artists, anime, or musicians
Photographs of you wearing a special outfit, another special place to you, or favorite fabric
Talent video! Record yourself performing a joke, song, dance, story, or athletic feat
Introduce everyone to your family and/or friends and tell us more about your culture

The gift exchange will begin around 9:20am/2:20pm, after a short debrief of the COIL. Prof Okeke and Prof Davie will ask a few students to comment on what they enjoyed the most, what they learned, how they were challenged, and so on.

Students can also use this time (and the chat feature in Zoom) to share constructive feedback that the instructors can use regarding future COIL collaborations.

Apart from the class party, there will also be a written post-COIL survey.

If you cannot attend the Zoom party on 4/18, please share your gifts no later than April 20.

Note: Our class Slack space will no longer be available after 7 May. Plan to keep your “gifts” in another format so you can enjoy them later.

Week 10: Post-Exchange Activities, COIL Evaluations, Debrief

Students complete post-COIL survey, submit written evaluations, and create personal reflection videos. The two instructors plan to assess the pre- and post-survey data, alter teaching methods accordingly in case some learning goals were not fully reached, and refine this module for future use (perhaps with different readings and an altered final project assignment).

Additionally, Prof Okeke and Prof Davie plan to chair a roundtable discussion at an academic conference on COIL collaborations involving African institutions. That will help them to connect to other instructors working in this field. They are also developing a bibliography and ideas for a peer-reviewed publication on their experience with this collaboration and student learning outcomes.

Successes, Challenges, and Suggestions for Future COIL Instructors

For a first attempt, this was a very successful and rewarding collaboration. Students on both sides reported very positive experience and learning outcomes that matched with the goals of the project.

From the perspective of the instructors, one of the biggest challenges was organizing the two synchronous guest lectures and the synchronous final class party. The 6/5-hour time difference made scheduling difficult. However, it was valuable to meet face to face and to interact. We would not want to remove that from the schedule, but rather plan ahead better with the scheduling and the live connection. Thought should be paid to the best balance between synchronous and asynchronous activities.

Second, some students wanted shorter, more streamlined, instructions for all assignments, circulated via WhatsApp only, with Slack as a backup platform.

When we attempted posting long detailed instructions for the final project on Slack, it became necessary to translate those instructions into brief texts to keep everyone on the same page.

Here are a few things we feel made this pilot collaboration successful:

- 1) planning all aspects of the collaboration, from the Slack space to grading to prompts and readings, several months in advance.
- 2) Weekly or biweekly WhatsApp calls between the two instructors.
- 3) Flexibility with deadlines for the final project.
- 4) Ensuring that students on both sides were graded in the same way for the same assignments
- 5) Circulating “netiquette” guidelines during the pre-COIL activity phase and holding students accountable when norms were not followed.
- 6) It was extremely helpful to have excellent COIL training, faculty stipends, and access to technical support throughout this collaboration, and to be introduced to a larger COIL community of instructors.

Acknowledgements

Prof Davie and Prof Okeke wish to thank the following colleagues for their generous support in the design of this pilot COIL collaboration: Moses Ochonu, Sani Umar, Schiro Withanachchi, Olga Aksakalova, Pablo Avila, Lisa Lindsay, Fred Cooper, Jean Kelly, Mari Fujimoto, Julia Sneeringer, and Mojubaolu Okome.

For more on COIL at QC, see <https://www.qc.cuny.edu/coil/>. Also see <https://coil.suny.edu/>.