# Designing a Virtual Exchange

A Customized Faculty Development Course for the University of Florida
Presented by Carine Ullom, EdD & Małgorzata (Gosia) Kurek, PhD
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## Course Description

This is a 6-week, fully online course during which participants become familiar with the various models for leveraging technologies to bring students from different cultures together, a teaching and learning methodology known as Virtual Exchange (VE). Additionally, participants learn about the requirements for designing and implementing a successful VE within a course that they teach regularly and begin developing their own project plan to conduct a virtual exchange. *Although preferred, having an established partner for the VE project is not a prerequisite for participation in this course.*

## Course Goals

Our goals for you in this course are for you to
1. experience what it's like to be a participant in an online learning environment (put yourselves in the shoes of your VE students)
2. experience what it is like to collaborate across distance in small groups with people whom you do not know well or at all (see parenthetical note in item 1)
3. experience the power of a robust video meeting environment
4. meet and collaborate with colleagues from your institution who are also interested in implementing VE (and perhaps develop a community of practice with them)
5. develop confidence in your ability to find (and be!) a suitable VE partner, to design a VE to embed in a course, and to implement said VE in an upcoming semester
6. come away with a collection of resources that will be useful to you in your virtual exchange work

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will
1. Recognize and articulate the challenges and pitfalls to successful VE design and implementation and be prepared to mitigate against them
2. Understand how to choose tools and technologies that are appropriate to the learning contexts of all partners and participants and to the desired learning outcomes of the VE
3. Develop empathy for their students and the VE situation they expect to put their students into
4. Understand how to design VE tasks to match the intended learning outcomes
5. Develop a draft VE course design and implementation plan

## Participation Expectations

● We estimate that you will need 3-4 hours per week during weeks 1-5 and 4-5 hours during week 6 to complete the components of this course.
● We will meet synchronously via desktop video conference five times for up to one hour each during the course (once per week during Modules 1-5 (Weeks 2-6))

- Criteria for successful completion of the course are:
    - Attend and actively participate in at least four of the five weekly meetings
    - Actively engage in each weekly (asynchronous) discussion forum
    - Submit all assignments (approximately one per week) on time.
    - Submit a draft VE project plan

## Topics & Timeline (Subject to Change)

| Week | Topic | Dates |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Soft Start: Introduction to the Course & Course Platform | Feb 18 - 24 |
| 2 | Module 1 - Introduction to VE | Feb 25 - Mar 3 |
|   | Spring Break @ UFL - Reading and Asynchronous Discussion | Mar 4 - 10 |
| 3 | Module 2 - Begin with the End in Mind (Or, Instructional Design is a Thing) | Mar 11 - 17 |
| 4 | Module 3 - Tools and Technologies to Support Your VE | Mar 18 - 24 |
| 5 | Module 4 - Successful Partnering | Mar 25 - 31 |
| 6 | Module 5 - Setting Yourselves (and your students) up for Success | April 1- 7 |

## Module Details

### Soft Start: Introduction to the Course & Course Platform
- Introducing ourselves
- Finding your way around our learning environment
- Affirming understanding of the course rhythm and engagement expectations
- Group formation

### Module 1 - Introduction to VE
- Topics:
    - Defining Virtual Exchange in a Teaching and Learning Context
    - VE Models (age levels, institutional contexts, and engagement/communication methods)
    - Readiness Assessment: Are you (and your institution) ready for this?
- Discussion Forum Topic: TBD
- Weekly Meeting Topic: Zoom Video Conferencing and its Affordances for VE
- Assignment: Reflection on my readiness for VE

### Module 2 - Begin with the End in Mind
- Topics:
    - Instructional Design:
        - Course Design and Why it Matters (Hint: It matters even more in a VE Context)
        - Learning Outcomes: Affective and Cognitive Growth Through VE

■ Designing Assignments and Activities in a VE Context
        ○ Topic 2: TBD
    ● Discussion Forum Topic: Learning Outcomes vs. Course Goals
    ● Weekly Meeting Topic: Designing Collaborative Assignments Across Cultures
    ● Assignments:
        ○ First draft of your course learning outcomes specific to VE
        ○ First draft of your proposed course design

## Module 3 - Tools and Technologies to Support Your VE
    ● Topics:
        ○ Tools and Technologies to Support Your VE
        ○ Designing Assignments and Activities in a VE Context, Cont'd.
    ● Discussion Forum Topic: TBD
    ● Weekly Meeting Topic: Let's talk technology!
    ● Assignment:
        ○ Small group collaboration (details TBD)
        ○ Second draft of VE Project Plan (details TBD)

## Module 4 - Successful Partnering
    ● Topics:
        ○ Getting to know your partner and his/her institutional context: A deep dive into academic culture as it relates to VE
        ○ Assessment of student artifacts and learning outcomes in a VE context
    ● Discussion Forum Topic: TBD
    ● Weekly Meeting Topic: TBD
    ● Assignment: Third Draft of VE Project Plan (details TBD)

## Module 5 - Setting Yourselves (and your students) up for Success
    ● Topics:
        ○ What could possibly go wrong and how to handle it?  Tales from the trenches
        ○ Characteristics of a successful virtual exchange facilitator
        ○ The Pre-Departure Orientation
    ● Discussion Forum Topic: TBD
    ● Weekly Meeting Topic: VE Challenges and how to handle them
    ● Assignment: Completed VE Course Plan Draft

## Post-Course Support

Participants who have successfully completed this course are eligible for further support during the preparation and/or implementation phases of their VE project.  Details are TBD and will be provided during the course as they are finalized.

# Faculty Biographies

**Malgorzata (Gosia) Kurek** holds a Ph.D in Applied Linguistics. She is a lecturer, teacher trainer and a researcher long involved in academic-level Virtual Exchange. Her principal research area in this field addresses teacher training contexts, with special focus on task design, digital literacy and Open Education. She has extensive experience designing and facilitating teacher training and language education VE projects. She is a training officer for Unicollaboration, involved in designing and delivering VE training for various EU projects and academic institutions. She publishes regularly and presents at various academic conferences in Europe. Gosia is based at Jan Dlugosz University, Czestochowa, Poland.

**Carine Ullom**, Associate Dean of Instructional Innovation, Adult, Professional, and Graduate Studies (APGS) at Ottawa University (KS) holds a B.S. in computer science and German from McPherson College and an MA in German Languages and Literatures from the University of Wyoming, where received a Fulbright grant to study computer-assisted language learning (CALL) at Oldenburg Universität in Germany. She has over 20 years of experience implementing educational technology in higher education, having served in roles at The University of Kansas and St. Lawrence University (SLU) prior to joining Ottawa University. At SLU she was the Director of the Language Resource Center, a role that was the perfect blend of her love of technology, language learning, and international education. At Ottawa University she has designed and co-taught Globally Connected Teaching and Learning (GCTL) (aka Virtual Exchange) courses, one of which received an Exemplary Course Award from Blackboard and another which formed the basis for her doctoral research. That research focused on the impact of GCTL on global identity development among pre-service teachers. Ullom has lived for extended periods in Germany and the Republic of Macedonia, is fluent in German, and has travelled to over twenty countries. She is passionate about the role that well-designed courses that leverage robust and easy-to-use technologies can have in supporting intercultural competence and global citizenship development in students.