ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL EXCHANGES AND GLOBAL CLASSROOMS: EDUCATING GLOBAL CITIZENS FOR PEACE
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The outbreak of a global pandemic in the form of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the ever-increasing xenophobia on immigration policies have called for a need to reexamine how universities can internationalize beyond traditional classroom instruction methods. Virtual exchanges have been shown to provide students with a more equal opportunity to develop their global competencies and cultural skills than study abroad. The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of virtual classroom exchanges in higher education for global citizenship development and peace education at a public institution in the United States. It examined university administrators, faculty, and student experiences, perceptions, and voices on global citizenship and peacebuilding within virtual exchange/global classrooms. The study utilized a qualitative case study approach. The qualitative approach consisted of interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis allowing for students and faculty to share their experiences of learning and teaching

in the virtual global classroom respectively, and administrators managing the virtual global classroom. The research found that university and departmental administrators served as curators of virtual exchange enabling global citizenship development by providing support via funding, pedagogy models, and navigating several of the international partnerships. Faculty served as facilitators of global citizenship development both within the classroom and outside of the classroom, shaping the project-based projects and challenging their students to think in a non-local mindset. The student participants in the virtual exchanges experienced development of cultural competencies for global citizenship by gaining direct, collaborative experiences working with students of other countries. Promotion of peace education within the virtual exchanges can happen. Albeit as unintentional outcome, students were able to develop much-needed peacebuilding skills that otherwise would not have been possible due to this being the sole form of internalization open to them and their community at the time of the study.

INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL EXCHANGES AND GLOBAL CLASSROOMS: EDUCATING GLOBAL CITIZENS FOR PEACE

by

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Dedication

"While I'm alive, I'll make tiny changes to Earth."

-Scott Hutchinson 1981-2018

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Chapter 1

International Virtual Exchanges and Global Classrooms

Higher education internationalization has become an increasingly challenging endeavor. The outbreak of a global pandemic in the form of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the ever-increasing xenophobia on immigration policies have called for a need to reexamine how universities can internationalize beyond traditional classroom instruction methods. International virtual classrooms or virtual exchanges have been shown to provide students with a more equal opportunity to develop their global competencies and cultural skills than study abroad (Custer et al., 2017). Traditional internationalization methods of student mobility through study abroad (involving physically traveling abroad) and international student enrollments at foreign institutions of higher learning (they need to study on a campus in the US for example) may no longer be as effective as they have been in the past with current barriers, such as COVID-19 and changes in immigration regulations. These barriers have led to a need to reconceptualize the internationalization of higher education on how we educate college students for global competencies and peace education. Through the use of online virtual conferencing technology such as Zoom™ as well as online learning platforms, such as Miro, Gather Town, Canvas, and others, virtual exchanges can still operate in the turbulent times of a pandemic environment, or seemingly never-ending changes to immigration regulations, decreasing international student enrollment, and challenges to inbound and outbound student mobility due to a global pandemic.

Background

Internationalization in higher education has traditionally consisted of student mobility through international enrollments and exchange programs, faculty-led short-term study abroad,

and international studies within curriculum expansion (Hser, 2005; Sandreen et al., 1999). Starting as early as the 1980s, under the influence of globalization, concerted efforts had been made by universities to expand their global missions which they integrated into their mission statements (Henson et al., 1991). Into the 21st century, new forms of internationalization started to appear and take root with the expansion of virtual exchanges. With advancements in technology, students are now able to interact with peers from across the world from their own homes through virtual exchange. This eliminates challenges such as financial barriers and the necessity to travel abroad to access international education that previous generations faced when seeking to grow as global citizens.

Over the past several decades, however, there has been an increase in restrictions for international students to access the American higher education system due to the changes in immigration policies. Students studying in the United States on an F-1 visa face strict regulations and policies from the United States federal government. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services states that foreign students who are studying in language training programs and/or their academic studies are classified as F-1 nonimmigrants (USCIS, 2017). Students studying on F-1 visas must be enrolled full-time and are not allowed to work off-campus during their first year of studying (USCIS, 2017). This means that students must come with enough financial support and it restricts who can access the American educational system because of one's citizenship and socio-economic status.

Additionally, international students on F-1 visas are tracked and monitored by the Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS). SEVIS was developed in response to the attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993 when it was revealed that one of the terrorists was a former international student in the United States on an expired student visa (OIJ, 2002).

Prior to their reorganization into the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Naturalization Services acknowledged they were unaware of how many international students were there in the United States at the time of the 1993 World Trade Center attack (OIJ, 2002). This led to policy reform with the Illegal Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 (SEVIS, 2018).

Mobility Challenges

Impact of the United States Travel Bans

After a decade of increasing international student enrollment in United States colleges and universities, the 2016/2017 academic year marked the first recent decline in new international student enrollment (IIE, 2018). This has been spurred by a series of four travel bans issued by then-American President Donald Trump starting in January 2017. Executive Order 13769 signed on January 27, 2017, was the first policy that issued a 90-day travel ban on nationals, which include F-1 visa holders from Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran (Federal Register, January 2017; NAFSA, 2018). On March 6, 2017, President Trump replaced and revoked Executive Order 13769 with the signing of Executive Order 13780 (NAFSA, 2018). Commonly referred to as Travel Ban 2.0, Executive Order 13780 identified Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen as countries of concern and denied entrance of citizens from these countries into the United States (NAFSA, 2018). Citizens from Iraq could still enter the United States due to their relationship with the United States since Operation Iraqi Freedom, but with increased scrutiny to determine security risks (Federal Register, March 2017). Like Executive Order 13769, Travel Ban 2.0 was implemented for a 90-day period on restricted travel (NAFSA, 2018). September 24, 2017, saw the introduction of the 3rd iteration of the travel bans with Proclamation 9645 (NAFSA, 2020c). Travel Ban 3.0 enhanced vetting for detecting terrorists

attempting to enter the United States for individuals from Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen (NAFSA, 2020c).

On June 26, 2018, the United States Supreme Court upheld Proclamation 9645 to limit individuals from specific countries from entering the United States, with a 5-4 vote (NAFSA, 2018). This decision restricted the ability of students from Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen to study in the United States (Supreme Court, 2018). A fourth expansion of the travel ban was issued on January 31, 2020, with Proclamation 9983 (NAFSA, 2020c). Travel Ban 4.0 includes citizens from all the countries listed in Travel Ban 3.0 and added Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tanzania. While the travel bans still allow prospective international students from all countries to apply for F-1 visas to study in the United States, there has been a decrease in new international student enrollments since the first inception of the travel ban. The changes in federal immigration policy have had an impact on student mobility with declining new international student enrollments in the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 academic years (IIE, 2020).[1] These policies caused questioning by international students from countries not listed by the travel ban to reconsider their educational endeavors within the United States out of fear that the negative immigration policies may have on them and if they might be restricted in the future (Inside Higher Education, 2018). A lack of international student enrollment in American colleges and universities can have devastating impacts on the United States politically, culturally, and economically.

[1] January 20, 2021 President Joseph Biden overturned the Bans on Entry to the United States Proclamations 9645, 9723, and 9983 and Executive Order 13780 (The White House, 2021).

COVID-19

COVID-19 has also had a large impact on international students' ability to study in the United States.[2] In September 2020, the United States Center for Disease Control identified that foreign nationals who have traveled, resided in, or visited the 34 countries on their list would not be allowed to enter the United States. These countries include Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iran, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City, and Wales (CDC, 2020).

Additionally, COVID-19 has a large financial impact on the United States economy. The projected decrease in international student enrollment for fall 2020 was an estimated $3 billion loss in revenue for higher education institutions in the United States (NAFSA, 2020a). On July 6, 2020, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program announced that non-immigrant students studying in the United States on an F-1 or M-1 visa are not eligible for fully online coursework for the fall 2020 term (ICE.GOV, 2020). Students who take a full course load, traditional face-to-face instruction on a campus are allowed to follow "existing federal regulations" and students who are attending schools with a hybrid model, where students take courses in a face-to-face and online setting, can take more than one course or three credits online (ICE.GOV, 2020). With the change in immigration regulations and the impact of COVID-19 the United States was preparing for a reduction of international student enrollments of 25% (ACE, 2020).

[2] By January 2022, majority of colleges and universities in the United States resumed in person learning (Inside Higher Education, 2022).

Another major factor in student mobility has been the fallout from COVID-19 which has reduced student mobility for domestic students wishing to study abroad. The 2020 NAFSA Financial Impact Survey indicated that of 346 institutions that submitted a response, 93.9% of institutions that offered education abroad programs canceled in response to COVID-19 (NAFSA, 2020a). The loss of education abroad programs has a potential of $1 billion in lost revenue to the United States economy (NAFSA, 2020a). Changes in immigration policies and COVID-19 have impacted college students' ability to gain crucial skills in global competencies gained in studying in another country.

Global Competencies

Global competencies are vital skills for students to possess to be successful in a global society (USDOE, 2012). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) defined *global competence as* "the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development" (OECD, 2018, p.7). Global competence is the ability to understand global issues of significance and to be able to act upon them (Boix-Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

Global Citizenship

To operate and navigate the diverse world, education must produce global citizens through global citizenship education. Global citizenship education doesn't focus on just one area of learning, in fact, it consists of at least three areas of learning: cognitive, socioemotional, and behavioral (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015). Students of global citizenship education must be socially connected, informed, respectful of diversity, and show ethical

responsibility (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015*)*. Global citizenship is not just a global, national, or local matter as it relies on interdependency with political, social, and economic structures to create a sense of belonging to common humanity (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015*)*.

Peace Education

Peace education has been closely associated with the development of global citizenship. The objective of peace education is "to provide the development of an authentic planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human condition by changing the social structures and the patterns of thought that have created it" (Reardon, 1988, p. 10). Noddings (2012) identified peace education for "a more universal sense of citizenship, guiding patriotism towards becoming a cosmopolitan form whilst accepting global needs and contributions" (p.52). Moreover, Noddings (2003) states the major goal of all education should be to nurture the idea of caring. At the heart of this goal is dialogue. Educators must teach students to listen to one another while not imposing their values on others, but rather understand how their actions can impact one another in a global society (Noddings, 2003; Noddings, 2018).

Statement of the Research Problem

Global competencies have historically been acquired through student mobility by studying abroad or deciding to pursue a degree in a different country. The outbreak of a global pandemic, COVID-19, and the Travel Bans in the United States have drastically negatively impacted the ability of students to gain access to vital global competency skill sets. Global barriers with the outbreak of COVID-19 and ever-increasing systematic barriers that xenophobic

immigration policies present have called for a need to reexamine how universities can internationalize beyond traditional methods.

Purpose of the Study

International virtual classrooms or virtual exchanges have been shown to provide students with a more equal opportunity to develop global competencies and cultural skills than study abroad (Custer et al., 2017). With current barriers due to COVID-19 and changes in immigration regulation, traditional internationalization methods may no longer be as effective as they have been in the past. This has led to a reconceptualization of the internationalization of higher education on how we educate college students towards global citizenship and peace. Instead of being restrained by cross-border exchanges, international virtual classrooms can still operate in the turbulent times of seemingly never-ending changes to immigration regulations, decreasing international student enrollment, and challenges to outbound student mobility due to a global pandemic. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of virtual classroom exchanges in higher education for peace education and global citizenship development at a public institution in the United States. It will examine college students, faculty, and administrators' experiences, perceptions, and voices on global citizenship and peacebuilding within virtual exchange/global classrooms.

Methodology & Research Questions

This study utilizes a qualitative case study approach. The qualitative approach consisted of interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis allowing for students and faculty to share their experiences of learning and teaching in the virtual global classroom respectively, and administrators managing the virtual global classroom. This allowed for a greater understanding of the participants' global citizenship competency development.

The research questions addressed in this dissertation are:

- *RQ1: How do administrators at a public institution in the United States perceive their leadership of virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and developing/promoting peace education?*
- *RQ2: How do instructors at a public institution in the United States perceive their participation in virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and developing/promoting peace education?*
- *RQ3: How do students at a public institution in the United States perceive their participation in virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and to developing/promoting peace education?*

Significance

The significance of the study can be quite extensive. There is no arguing that COVID-19 has changed the way we operate in the world. One of the greatest impacts has been on student mobility through study abroad, exchange programs, and international student enrollments. Student mobility has been shown to have an economic impact, is a form of soft power diplomacy, and creates international cultural dialogues that are very important in peace education. While virtual global classrooms might not have the same economic impact as international students enrolling in another country in person, it does have the ability to create spaces for soft power diplomacy. Nye (2008, 2019) defines soft power diplomacy as a way to use persuasion rather than hard power diplomacy which utilizes money and coercion. Soft economic power can be seen as a resource in a country's policies, culture, and values (Nye,2019). Moreover, it has been vital in ending global conflicts such as the Cold War (Nye, 2019). This is

needed now more than ever with an increasing rise in xenophobia and changes in immigration policies on a global level.

This study is relevant to students, faculty, university administrators, and policymakers. For students, it allows them the opportunity to engage with peers from around the world in an international educational exchange without having to leave their home campus or home, in stringent contexts such as in the COVID-19 era. For faculty, it allows for similar partnerships to be built with their co-instructors in another country, as it does with the students. It provides faculty interested in research a unique opportunity to partner with international collaborations on such things as joint publications, grants, and service for their tenure packet. This benefits university administrators as its campuses with virtual global classrooms can market that they provide socially distant international experiences during the COVID-19 era. Finally, for policymakers, it shows that even with xenophobic immigration policies, international collaborations and partnerships can still thrive even under oppressive conditions. Students who have an understanding of each other's differences are less likely to want to bring harm to that person (Noddings, 2003). It creates a much-needed peace and levels of global understanding that are otherwise very limited if not near impossible now.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and the Context of Research

For this study, I aim to investigate global citizenship and peace education in a virtual exchange within a higher education context. In this chapter, I will examine existing literature. First, I will define internationalization and expand on this topic within the context of higher education. Next, I will examine the concepts of global competencies, global citizenship education, and peace education. I will then expand on virtual exchange including defining the virtual exchange, looking at different terminologies, and looking at contexts. I will conclude this chapter by providing the context of the institution used for this case study, the background of the institution, and the virtual exchanges it houses.

Defining & Understanding Internationalization

To understand why the internationalization of higher education is important, it is vital to understand the terminology used in this field and provide a geo-political context. There are a variety of definitions for the internationalization of education. Knight (2012) addresses the "-ization" suffix of internationalization as a process of enhancing or achieving goals that are set. Therefore, internationalization is defined in terms of institutions achieving goals of becoming more global or international. Within an educational context, internationalization can be understood as educational systems achieving goals that through curriculum and research endeavors, students move towards becoming global citizens. This belief is reaffirmed on a macro level as Yemini (2015) characterized internationalization of education as endeavors by educational systems integrating multilingual, multicultural, and global dimensions to create a sense of global citizenship for their students.

Internationalization of education can be used by the geo-political power structures to expand their authority (de Wit, 2002; Dolby & Rahman, 2008; Krenčeyova, 2017). Historically, we have seen this during the height of the Cold War. As de Wit (2002) addressed, during the Cold War era the Soviet Union and the United States utilized international education as a way to magnify their sphere of ideological and other influences. These attempts to use international education for the expansion of geo-political powers during the Cold War are still evident in the United States Department of Education's views on the internationalization of education. The first fully articulated initiative on international education was launched in November 2012 under the Obama administration with the *Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement* (US Department of Education, 2012). In this report, two goals to be achieved from international education and engagement are: 1) to strengthen the US educational system and 2) to advance American international priorities (US Department of Education, 2012). These goals were to be met by the American educational systems by increasing students' global competence, learning best practices from other countries, and through the engagement in education diplomacy (US Department of Education, 2012).

An updated *Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement* was published six years later under the Trump administration (US Department of Education, 2018). While the goals remain the same, objectives were updated to take a more United States-centric approach rather than a shared approach with other countries. For example, while the goals of the framework remained unchanged, e.g., to "strengthen U.S. education and advance U.S. international priorities," the objectives shifted to strictly prioritize the goals and advancement of the United States international priorities (US Department of Education, 2012; US Department of Education, 2018).

The United States Department of Education's focus on internationalization policies for the nation's decentralized education system remains a relatively new phenomenon (Engel et al., 2016). Current immigration policies use hard power or coercion to dictate their international relations and the travel ban can be seen as a direct example. The American-centric approach that has been carried out under the Trump administration directly affects international students' ability to study in the United States.

Internationalization in Higher Education

Internationalization in higher education is defined as "the process of integration of international, intercultural, or global dimensions into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2008, p. 48). There are many factors why universities internationalize and motivations for internationalization can vary across institutional types. Altbach (2007) identified financial benefit as a determining factor for for-profit institutions to internationalize, while non-profit institutions see the benefit of internationalization as a way to increase students' cultural competencies (Altbach, 2007) rather than financial motivations (Knight, 2006).

Traditional internationalization experiences such as study abroad have raised institutional profiles for elite colleges (Altbach, 2007; Siaya & Hayward, 2003). Scholars have called for a need to redress higher education internationalization, one that shifts away from elitism wherein only the economically well-off students can benefit due to having the financial means to travel to study abroad and move their endeavors towards an internationalization of curriculum (De Wit, 2016). As De Wit (2016) professes, economic benefit should not be the only reason for institutions to internationalize, rather internationalization should be a way to enhance the quality of education for their students.

Knight (2011) warns institutions about five myths around the internationalization of higher education. Myth one is that foreign students serve as internationalization agents, which assumes international student enrollments serve as a way for universities to internationalize their institution, whereas international students often create their own enclave with other international students, creating a more limited and exclusive international experience for themselves rather than connecting to the culture of their host country. Myth two holds that a reputation for internationalization is an indication of the quality of education, whereas the quantity of internationalization efforts does not always increase the quality of education for students. Myth three believes that the more international institutional agreements the more internationalization, whereas many universities sign international agreements with other institutions as a status symbol rather than as functioning collaborations. Myth four concerns international accreditation that universities receive, which implies that the more internationalized an institution is accredited, the better, but this does not speak to the quality of teaching, service, and research in the institution. Finally, myth five relates to global branding, wherein there is a false belief that an institution's global standing will improve with internalization efforts. Cohesive partnerships, such as virtual exchange can increase institutional "status symbols" and create functioning collaboration rather than just an illusion of one.

Virtual exchanges have been adopted by higher education institutions as a way for universities to internationalize their institutions' curricula. Bruhn (2017) identifies virtual exchange as a "process of introducing an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the delivery, purpose or functions of higher education with the help of information and communications technology" (p. 2). Additionally, virtual exchange offers substitutes and/or can

complement existing student study abroad programs such as international student enrollments and education abroad in the physical sense (de Wit & Hunter, 2016).

While challenges around immigration regulations can impede the student's ability to study abroad, participate in a specific country, or determine if they remain home (Altbach, 2007), virtual exchanges offer universities a unique way to internationalize. They provide students a space to come together where physical mobility would otherwise not be accessible (Simon, Hussein & Weaver, in Press). Virtual exchanges can be used as a strategy to further advance the internationalization efforts and initiatives within higher education (Bruhn, 2018).

Modes of Internationalization in Higher Education

When looking at studies on international students within a tertiary education (e.g., higher education) context, enrollment numbers have been a key component. International student enrollment has economic and cultural benefits for the universities and to the countries that enroll them (HEPI, 2018; IIE, 2017; Universities Australia, 2018). With the announcement of Travel Ban 1.0, a total of 598 institutions of higher education in the United States stated their support for the internationalization of their campuses with an open letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security (ACE, 2017). The letter expressed the institutions' concern for national security but also highlighted the goodwill as well as the economic and cultural benefits brought about by internationalization (ACE, 2017). The cultural benefits include international students and scholars serving as goodwill ambassadors when they return to their home countries or go to other countries (ACE, 2017). This goodwill serves as a form of soft power, in which the United States can get others to want the same outcomes as the United States desires through cooperation (Nye, 2008). The internationalization approach benefits the United States more than the current approach of using hard power in an attempt to gain what it wants (Nye, 2008). While the

immigration policy changes have achieved their goal by limiting access to citizens from certain countries' citizenship there are lasting economic implications as a direct result of those decisions.

Additionally, international students are important to colleges providing campuses with a sense of globalization and an economic boost through international students paying higher tuition and fees than domestic students (Bohman, 2014; McDonald, 2014). For the 2018-2019 academic year, the 1,095,299 international students enrolled in American institutions of higher learning contributed 41 billion dollars to the United States economy (IIE, 2020; NAFSA, 2020b). Additionally, international students have a large impact on the American job market. For the 2016-2017 academic year, international students studying in the United States were directly responsible for creating 153,603 direct jobs and 296,663 indirect jobs (NAFSA, 2017). This indicates that three jobs are created for every seven international students enrolled at American colleges and universities (NAFSA, 2018).

Every state benefited economically for the 2017/2018 academic year with international students studying in the United States. Alaska, the state that holds the nation's lowest international student enrollment with 414 individuals, still saw 93 jobs created by the students which contributed $12.1 million to the state's economy in the academic year (NAFSA, 2017). Meanwhile, the state of California is on the opposite side of the spectrum and was the nation's leader in enrollment, job generation, and economic contributions. California enrolled the most international students in the United States with 161,942 enrollments (NAFSA, 2017). The enrolled international students contributed to the job market by creating employment for 74,086 individuals and generating $6.6 billion for the Californian economy (NAFSA, 2017).

According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2018) for the 2017-2018 academic year, there were 4.6 million college and university students globally, who were enrolled at institutions

located outside of their country of nationality. Within the context of the United States for the 2017-2018 academic year, 341,751 American students studied abroad for academic credit (IIE, 2020). While studying abroad provides students with the ability to gain global competencies overseas it does not allow everyone an equal opportunity due to race, ability, and socioeconomic class. White students accounted for 70% of the study abroad participants for the 2017-2018 academic year, with Latinx students accounting for 10.6%, Asian-American and Pacific Islander accounting for 8.4%, African American students accounting for 6.1%, multiracial students accounting for 4.4%, and Native American students account for .5% (IIE, 2020). Additionally, students with disabilities accounted for 9.2% (IIE, 2020).

Global Competencies

Global competence is a vital skill for students to possess to be successful in a global society (USDOE, 2012). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) defined *global competence as* "the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development" (OECD, 2018, p.7). Global competence is the ability to understand global issues of significance and to be able to act upon them (Boix-Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

The Asia Society's Matrix of Global Competence divides global competence into four interactive categories for students: "Investigate the World" allows students to explore the world beyond their setting; "Recognize Perspectives" has students recognize the perspectives of themselves as well as others; "Communicate Ideas" encourages students to share their ideas through effective communication to diverse audiences; and "Take Action" allows students to

implement their ideas for improved conditions (Boix-Mansilla et al., 2011). Through these four action-oriented steps students "understand the world through disciplinary and interdisciplinary study" (Boix-Mansilla et al., 2011, p.12). Additionally, it is important to understand that global competence goes beyond cognitive learning by blending emotional, ethical, and social development (Boix-Mansilla et al., 2011).

Global Citizenship

For students to operate and navigate the diverse world, education must produce global citizens through global citizenship education. Global citizenship has been the emerging term used when describing the outcome of international education, and it has been used to educate those as a preparation to work and operate in an ever-increasing globalized society (De Wit, 2016). It expands on the notions of global competence and intercultural competencies, which develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in different cultural contexts, to "actively" participate in improving the global society (O'Dowd, 2019). The educating of global citizens doesn't focus on just one area of learning, in fact, it consists of at least three areas of learning: cognitive, socioemotional, and behavioral (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015). UNESCO (2014) defines global citizen education as a way "to empower learners to engage and assume active roles, both locally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world" (p. 15).

According to UNESCO (2015), global citizen education establishes a lifelong learning approach which aims to:

- Encourage learners to analyze real-life issues critically and identify possible solutions creatively and innovatively;

●Support learners to revisit assumptions, world views, and power relations in mainstream discourses and consider people/groups that are systematically underrepresented/marginalized;

●Focus on engagement in individual collective action to bring desired changes;

●Involve multiple stakeholders, including those outside the learning environment, in the community, and wider society (p.16).

Students as global citizens must be socially connected, informed, respectful of diversity, and show ethical responsibility (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015). As the term global may suggest, global citizenship does not just focus on local matters. Global citizenship expands the ability of students to address global, national, and local matters as it relies on citizens having a sense of interdependence and a sense of belonging to the common humanity (UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015).

It is vitally important to understand what global citizenship is when it comes to education as well as addressing common misconceptions on global citizenship. Table 1 illustrates the importance and shows the diversity of what global citizenship education encompasses and what it doesn't according to Oxfam.

Table 1. This data shows the components of Global Citizenship. (Table adapted from Oxfam, 2015)

Global Citizenship Involves…	*It is not…*
Asking questions and critical thinking	Telling people what to do or how to think
Exploring local-global connections and our personal views, values, and assumptions	Only about far away people and places

Exploring the complexity of global issues and engaging in multiple perspectives	Providing simple solutions to complex issues
Exploring issues of social justice locally and globally	Focused on charitable fundraising
Applying learning to real-world issues and contexts	Abstract learning devoid of real-life application and outcomes
Opportunities for learners to take informed, reflective action and have their voices heard	Tokenistic inclusion of learners in decision-making
All ages	Too difficult for young children to understand
All areas of the curriculum	An extra subject
Enrichment of everyday teaching and learning	Just a focus for a particular day or week
The whole school environment	Limited to the classroom

A global citizen is a person aware of a wider world, respects and values diversity, shows a passion for social justice, takes ownership of their actions, collaborates with others to create a more equitable and sustainable world, and has an understanding of how the world works (Oxfam, 2015). The Oxfam components of Global Citizenship will serve as a theoretical framework for this research project. It will provide context during the observations as well as inform the interview portion of this research project.

Innovative teaching approaches are needed in the delivery of global citizenship education. Online delivery provides students, researchers, and faculty access to different ways of collaboration through digital course content, social media, and online project collaborations (UNESCO, 2014). Blended learning environments provide students with a collaborative

experiential learning experience as well as the ability for online connections to one another online while also providing offline learning activities (UNESCO, 2014).

Peace Education

Peace education plays an important role in global citizen development and international education. In the early 20th century following World War I, Europe and the United States saw the emergence of Peace Education. This trend continued to evolve with the introduction of international relations as a way for social science teachers to introduce their students to not wanting to declare war against foreign nations or nationals (Harris, 2004). Following World War II education for "world citizenship" started to emerge (Harris, 2004; Read, 1949). By the 1980s we saw an influx of global citizenship development within peace education. Reardon (1988) defines peace education as a way to change the social structures and systems of thought that have been created so humans can function as global citizens. Peace education serves as a way for students to begin to understand world order (Diaz et al, 1999 & Heater, 1984). This level of competencies is vital in avoiding future conflict. Ikenda (2001) used the term "humanitarian competition" as a key element in overcoming political powers, with a focus on coming together to produce happiness and the well-being of all humans. Educators teach in a way that shows how a global model for peace can provide global security (Harris, 2004). Peace development and education can be seen as a way of rediscovering our common destiny of a global society and eliminating violence by military and extremist forces (Chhabra & Asghar, 2002). Dialogue must be at the center of peace education.

Noddings (2018) believes the major goal of education should be to nurture the ideal of ethical caring, with dialogue being the key to succeeding and utilizing educators as the conduit to promote peace and a commitment to moral awareness. Peace education must be an active

endeavor for those seeking peace where educators become the peacemakers (Lin, 2008; Noddings, 2015). Peacemakers are tasked with the creation of alternative versions of possible futures, that recognize and produce alternative conceptions of rationality, with rich and imaginative alternative diverse voices, whose conversation with one another will create those futures sought (Cohn, 1987). Peace education adapts to the surroundings that it finds itself in, as it attempts to address varying forms of violence in diverse communities (Harris, 2004). Therefore, a sense of community must be developed between those active in the conversation of peace. The voice of citizens must be magnified to create a community for those who embrace a non-violent society and who resist division, destruction, and dehumanization (Boggs & Howell, 1991).

Intercultural engagement becomes a key cog in being able to build a global community to create peace. One of the key pieces of this is being able to learn about multiple perspectives and have contact with those with differing views (Lin et al., 2015). The contact hypothesis theory posits contact reduces intergroup conflicts between people from different groups through face-to-face encounters (Allport, 1954). Allport (1954) presents four key elements needed for an effective environment: 1) it must be supportive, 2) all participants must share equal status, 3) contact must be sustained and close, and 4) there must be cooperation. Forbes (2004) offers an updated version and posits there are three crucial elements for the positive effects of contact: hypothesis;

1. The equality or inequality of status of the different groups in contact;
2. Their cooperative or competitive interdependence in the pursuit of common goals; and
3. The presence or absence of social norms supporting intergroup contact (p. 70).

One of the key takeaways from both Allport and Forbes is that a favorable setting can reduce discrimination and prejudices. For a setting to foster peace education and have a sustained effect, educators must be committed to fostering this environment throughout the educational experience (Feuerverger, 2001; Kester, 2012). Contact hypothesis as a theory has been used as a framework within peace education. Dialogue can be transformative in peace education (Lin, 2008). Facilitated intergroup dialogue has been used in higher education settings to improve group relations where divisions may exist between communities (Dessel & Ali, 2012; Nagda et al., 2009; Pettigrew & Troop, 2006). Lin et al. (2015) expanded on existing contact theories by offering five essential conditions and four essential processes:

For contact between conflicting groups to succeed in decreasing feelings of hatred, fear, or resentment toward each other, there are five essential conditions and four essential processes that must be met:

Five Essential Conditions:

1. All participants must have equal status in the contact situation
2. Participants must all have a common goal
3. They all must work cooperatively to reach that goal
4. The must be institutional support enforcing equal status of participants
5. The contact situation must be sustained to ensure friendship potential

Four Essential Processes:

1. Learning about the other in order to create new foundations of knowledge
2. Developing new group norms which lead to behavior and attitude change
3. Incorporating emotions to help generate affective ties

4. Reassessing perceptions of their own group through ingroup reappraisals (p. 2).

In developing cultural understanding and learning perspectives from one another, the space in which shared dialogue takes place is key. Students taking part in a virtual exchange course create discourse and fall into an in-between setting known as a "third space" (Wang, 2004). Third space is described as ineffable, invisible (Wang, 2004), as a magic secret universe (Weng & Lin, 2013), a space that is alive and has movement (Aoki, 1999), and it is a lived space that is not fractured by this or that (Pinar, 2005). Third space has been utilized to build bridges of cultural understanding and appreciation (Weng & Lin, 2013). Essentially, the third space is a realm outside of the normal structure of interaction and the lack of old formality and rules creates new space for learning and embracing integration.

For world peace to come true, Lin (2008) called for a new global vision for peace with the expansion of our awareness of how the world is viewed, based on the condition of universal love and co-existence. With the current turmoil and lack of mobility in the world, it is safe to say that it is time to once again call for a new or expanded vision of how we educate for global peace. Virtual exchange may act as a catalyst for this new vision.

Virtual Exchange

Virtual exchange develops intercultural competencies between students from across the globe in an online or virtual setting (O'Dowd, 2019). When dealing with student mobility issues with COVID-19 this online space allows for competencies to be developed that would otherwise be nearly impossible. Virtual exchange can be defined as an extended online engagement of students in collaboration with partners from other geographical locations or cultural contexts as a part of their education experiences with educators facilitating the experience (O'Dowd, 2018,

O'Dowd & Lewis, 2016). When describing virtual exchange as a form of internationalization, there have been many different terminologies used by scholars and practitioners.

Virtual Exchange Terminologies

Many different terms are used when describing online international exchanges. When it comes to internationalization at home initiatives within higher education, de Witt (2016) uses the terms 'online intercultural exchange,' 'virtual mobility,' 'collaborative online international learning,' and 'virtual exchange' to describe this emerging trend. Other terms of 'online intercultural education,' 'telecollaboration,' and' online intercultural exchange' have also been used by scholars (Helm, 2017). Most recently, O'Dowd (2018) established six types or terms of virtual exchanges: tele-collaboration, globally networked learning environments, e-tandem or tele-tandem, collaborative online international learning, online intercultural exchange, and global virtual teams.

Emerging as the preferred term for this practice, virtual exchange is used by government and non-government organizations such as Sharing Perspectives and Soliya, as well as the Stevens Initiative, the European Commission, and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (O'Dowd, 2018). In an attempt at a more encompassing term, that covers the research under 'telecommunication' and the emergence of 'virtual exchange,' O'Dowd (2018) suggests the use of "The Cross-Disciplinary Organisation for Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange in Higher Education" (p.4). The use of shared terminology can help raise awareness for educators to seek resources to establish their virtual exchanges. With shared terminology and common language, virtual exchanges can be used to promote cross-cultural dialogue, which is vital in global citizen development. To stay consistent with the goal of shared terminology across the field the term virtual exchange will be used in the study when describing the extended online

engagement of students in collaboration with partners from other geographical locations or cultural contexts as a part of their education experiences with educators facilitating the experience.

Virtual Exchange as Internationalization

Virtual exchanges provide comprehensive internationalization at home (Lee & Cai, 2019; Morris et al., 2018), by improving cross-cultural understanding (Caluinau, 2019), global skill competencies (Bassani & Bachem, 2019; Toner, 2018), and fostering equity for its participants (Custer & Tuominen, 2017; de Witt, 2016; Elliott-Gower et al, 2015; Soliya, 2020). De Witt (2016) professes virtual intercultural exchanges as "a more inclusive, innovative approach to internationalization" (p. 76). One of the most important innovations of this newer form of internationalization is the level of equity that it provides to its participants. Virtual exchanges allow for greater mobility for students without the traditional expenses associated with students relocating to another country for their studies (Custer & Tuominen, 2017; de Witt, 2016; Elliott-Gower et al, 2015; Soliya, 2020).

A departure from traditional methods of internationalization, virtual exchanges have expanded over the years, with the first appearing within years of the internet (O'Dowd, 2018). Many of the first iterations linked students studying foreign languages with distance partners (O'Dowd, 2018). One of the earliest examples of this connection was created by professors at St. Olaf's College in Minnesota, who wanted to allow teachers to connect their students via email addresses with language partners in other countries through the IECC LISTSERV (O'Dowd, 2018). This service had over 28,000 partnership requests over a nine-year period beginning with its inception in 1991 (O'Dowd, 2018; Rice, 2005). Since then, virtual exchanges have evolved into a transdisciplinary model.

Currently, there are four different approaches to higher education virtual exchanges. The first focuses on language learning initiatives, which are often practitioner-led, with the purpose of language development, and intercultural, and digital competencies (O'Dowd, 2018). The second approach focuses on being subject-specific, with business studies emerging to prepare students for intercultural skills that are needed in the professional world (O'Dowd, 2018). The third approach is for service providers, which can be outsourced by universities to develop digital literacies and intercultural awareness (O'Dowd, 2018). The fourth and final approach is the shared syllabus approach, which incorporates global perspectives to the syllabus, with an aim of digital and intercultural literacy (O'Dowd, 2018). The virtual environment enriches students' learning experience (Davis et al., 2019).

Virtual exchange has not been without its challenges for institutions adopting the newer form of internationalization. As Rubin (2016) found, university administrators can be reluctant to support faculty in virtual exchange course developments. The two most common areas university administrators impact were by failing to provide the faculty with financial support to develop the courses and/or failing to release faculty from their teaching load (Rubin, 2016). Faculty that can overcome these administrative issues focus on course development as a key aspect to ensure successful learning outcomes. Moreover, course development plays a vital role in students' level of cultural understanding. Caluianu (2019) found that time for reflection was imperative in students gaining deeper cross-cultural understandings, hence without purposefully established time set aside by the instructors in the exchange, there is no guarantee these skills will be stronger in the online setting.

Virtual Exchange within the United States

Virtual exchange within the United States has been used by colleges and universities to increase the cultural competencies of their student population through "Internationalization at Home" (Custer et al., 2016). One of the best-known virtual exchanges is the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) which belongs to the State University of New York Network of Universities (SUNY). SUNY's COIL was established with the goal of team-taught international classrooms which focused on a collaborative experiential learning environment for the students (Rubin, 2016). COIL has been able to connect a network of 39 member institutions through its Global Partner Network (COIL, 2020).

Another leader with virtual global partnerships in the United States is East Carolina University with their Global Academic Initiatives (GAI). East Carolina University has a comprehensive internationalization plan to prepare its students to be successful in global society via online learning strategies (GIA Mission, 2020; Morris et al., 2018). With over 60 institutions participating in virtual exchange in GAI on average 1,900 students from around the world take part each year (Morris et al., 2018).

Partnerships for virtual exchange expand beyond the universities that collaborate and the students that participate in the courses. The Stevens Initiative is a private-public partnership that promotes collaboration in virtual exchange programs to build skills that students traditionally gain in physical study abroad programs (Toner, 2018). Housed under the Aspen Institute, the Steven Initiative in August of 2020 put out a call to support the growth of virtual exchange programs for higher education, K-12, and non-profit settings (Stevens Initiative, 2020). The initiative has earmarked $10 million to target the growth of global citizen development for students between the United States, North Africa, and the Middle East (Stevens Initiative, 2020).

Virtual Exchange for Peace

Firer (2008) stated that "virtual peace education has an independent rationale that justifies its merits as an additional model of peace education" (p.194). Virtual exchanges serve as an incubator for caring to develop, provide access to improving cross-cultural understanding (Caluinau, 2019; Cifuentes & Murphy, 2000), global skill competencies (Bassani & Bachem, 2019), and skills that students participating in virtual exchange acquire.

Virtual peace education utilizes web-based learning platforms to connect students from across the globe for intercultural dialogue (Frier, 2008). These platforms have been used to promote multicultural sensitivity and competencies for students to navigate the interconnected world (Riel, 1993) and allow students to gain differing perspectives (Cifuentes et al., 2000). Virtual exchange can also bring cultural understanding to countries that were once adversaries (Simon et al, 2020). One case of this has been with the Soliya program. Since its inception in 2003, Soliya has sought to improve ways of understanding and mitigating conflict between the Muslim World and the West (Elliott-Gower & Hill, 2015). The Soliya Connect Program consists of 222 universities connecting students in over 30 countries to 1) establish a deeper understanding of the perspectives of others around the world on important socio-political issues and 2) develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, and media literacy (Elliott-Gower et al., 2015; Soliya, 2020). The Connect Program is interdisciplinary and designed to be integrated into university courses, engaging students in dialogue about culture, religion, national, and ideological boundaries through web-conferencing (Soliya, 2020). Virtual peace education programs such as Soliya allow faculty to connect their students with an international partner for intercultural dialogues.

Background and Context for This Study: Virtual Exchange

In this section, I will provide the context of the institution for this research project. I will give an overview of the university's profile. This overview will consist of a brief institutional history and enrollments and then expand on the university's internationalization efforts. Finally, I will connect to their current partnerships and expand on their virtual exchanges or global classrooms

The University of Maryland (UMD) is a public land grant research institution located just outside of the United States capital city of Washington, DC (NCES, 2020). Founded in 1865 as a part of the Morrill Act, UMD can trace its roots as an agricultural college (UMD History & Mission, 2020). Maryland has grown into a comprehensive research institution to educate their students and advance knowledge growth in state, national, and global areas of importance (UMD History & Mission, 2020).

The 2019/2020 academic year saw 40,743 students enroll at the University of Maryland (NCES, 2020). Undergraduate student enrollments consisted of 30,511 (NCES, 2020) with international students making up approximately 3,500 students (UMD International Students, 2020) or 5% of the undergraduate student body (NCES, 2020).

Internationalization at the University of Maryland

Internationalization at UMD is offered through a variety of areas for their campus community to take part in. The Office of International Affairs oversees the global initiatives at UMD (Global Maryland, 2020). International opportunities consist of the Office of International Student and Scholar Services which assists international students and scholars at UMD, including visa regulations, new international students and scholar's orientation, and language partnership programming (Global Maryland- ISSS, 2020). In addition to the Office of

International Student and Scholar Services, the Office of International Affairs oversees global experiences for their students.

Global experiences are primarily divided into two major areas: experiences abroad and on-campus experiences (Global Maryland, 2021). Global experiences abroad allow students to earn credits while studying away from the university campus. Before COVID-19 about 2,000 UMD students studied abroad each year in 62 different counties (Global Maryland, 2021). In addition to education abroad, the University of Maryland also provides students with the ability to conduct research abroad, participate in civic engagement, as well as work or participate in an internship abroad (Global Maryland, 2021).

On-campus global experiences provide students with a way to build global competencies on a local level. Students can partake in several opportunities from the university without having to travel abroad. UMD offers students the ability to participate in living-learning communities that have an international focus. Four of the living-learning communities on campus have an international or global theme. The global living-learning communities allow students to "enrich their understanding of the causes and consequences of the world's interconnectedness and are provided with the academic and intercultural skills to help them address the issues globalization raises" (Global Maryland- Living and Learning, 2020). Students can also participate in language courses, global fellowships, academic programs with international focuses, and virtual exchange known at UMD as global classrooms (Global Maryland, 2021).

The Global Classroom Initiative

A luminary in virtual exchange within the Big Ten Academic Alliance is the Global Classroom Initiative at the University of Maryland (UMD). Launched in 2014, The Global Classroom Initiative at UMD is the only virtual exchange program currently offered of the 14

institutions in the Big Ten Academic Alliance (personal correspondence, November 23, 2020). UMD's Global Classroom Initiative connects students and faculty between their university and an international partner institution for a project-based course (Global Classrooms, 2020).

The aim of UMD's Global Classroom Initiative is for students to develop real-world competencies while addressing global challenges through creative solutions for a meaningful impact (Global Classrooms, 2020). UMD's Global Classroom Initiative is interdisciplinary and has had representation from the School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, Nutrition and Food Sciences, the Department of English, the University's Honors Program, Survey Methodology, the Department of Anthropology, the Department of Family Sciences, the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and the College of Education (Global Classrooms, 2020). When designing the courses faculty must make sure that their courses consist of the following criteria (GCI Handout, 2018):

- They need to be an international collaboration with at least one institution abroad
- The courses should be project-based focusing on real-life applications that address global needs
- There must be student collaboration in which students' teams from all institutions work together to complete the projects
- They must be impactful and produce at least one or more deliverables with a plan for implementation
- They must be virtual in which digital technologies are used for student learning

The 2020/2021 academic year which marked the sixth anniversary of the Global Classroom Initiative consisted of 25 universities in a virtual partnership seeking to address

complex global challenges within their disciplines (Global Classrooms, 2020). This was a growth from 20 university partnerships in 2018 (GCI Showcase Handout, 2018). The University of Maryland's Global Classroom Initiative partnerships for the 2020/2021 academic year can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2 2020/2021 University of Maryland Global Classroom Initiative Partnerships

UMD Department	Course	Partner Institution	Partner Country
Agriculture	Global Agriculture: Developing Extension Education & Agriculture Technologies in Africa	Liberia International Christian College	Liberia
Architecture	Carbon Neutral Development Through NetZero	Nankai University	China
Architecture	Bridging the Gap Studio: Collaborative Design Thinking Across Cultures	Al Nahrain University	Iraq
Classics	Greek and Roman Culture in Context	TBA	Italy
Educational Leadership, Higher Education, and International Education	The College Student and Student Personnel Services in a Global Context	University of Cape Coast	Ghana
Higher Education, Student Affairs, and International Education Policy	International Higher Education	Multiple	Multiple
Higher Education, Student Affairs, and International Education Policy: Leadership Studies	Global Leadership in a Virtual Context	Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)	Hong Kong
College Park Scholars	Science, Technology, and Society	University of Cuenca	Ecuador
English	Advanced Composition: Tolkien in Oxford	TBA	The United Kingdom

Government	Capstone in International Development	Leiden University	The Netherlands
History	The Islamicate World 2.0: Studying Islamic Cultures through Computational Textual Analysis	Aga Khan University	The United Kingdom
Honors	Honors Seminar: Understanding U.S. Foreign Policy toward Afghanistan	American University of Afghanistan	Afghanistan
Information Science	Human-Centered Computing in a Global Context	Fudan University	China
Landscape Architecture	Sustainable Transformation and Adaptation- Culture and Earth	TBA	New Zealand
Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health	Risk Based Approach to Ensure Global Food Safety and Security	Cairo University	Egypt
Plant Science	Special Topics in Plant Science- Environmental Sustainability	TBA	New Zealand

UMD's Global Classroom Partnerships adapted from (Global Classrooms, 2020)

Summary

We have seen an expansion of internationalization initiatives between geo-political powers. Scholars call to readdress the way we approach internationalization within higher education to shift away from elitist models while creating more equity with opportunities for all students.

Virtual exchanges serve as a way to provide students with meaningful cross-cultural interactions that are vital in educating global citizens in their quest to become more aware of a wider world, respect, and value diversity, show a passion for social justice, take ownership of

their actions, collaborates with others to create a more equitable and sustainable world, and has an understanding on how the world works without the barriers that are associated with being physically involved in studying abroad. In virtual environments, the contact hypothesis has the potential to build bridges of peace between participants' cultures.

Students who participate in the Global Classroom Initiative at the University of Maryland focus on three professional skill-building components that they will face in the professional world: project-based, cross-cultural, and virtual (GCI Handout, 2018). Unlike SUNY's COIL and East Carolina University's GAI, UMD's Global Classroom Initiative does not offer an annual conference for its virtual classroom participants. However, UMD's Global Classroom Initiative does offer an annual showcase for students to share their projects with the greater university community. This study will examine the experiences, perceptions, and voices of college students participating, faculty members who facilitate, and the university administrators who oversee virtual exchanges at the University of Maryland. Contact hypothesis and dialogue will be at the center of the study to understand the potential impact of global citizenship education and peace education through virtual exchanges involving cross-cultural learning.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Restatement of the Purpose of the Study

Higher education internationalization has become an increasingly challenging endeavor. The outbreak of a global pandemic in the form of COVID-19 and ever-increasing xenophobia on immigration policies have called for a need to reexamine how universities can internationalize beyond traditional methods. The purpose of this study is to examine university administrators, faculty, and students' experiences, perceptions, and voices on global citizenship and peacebuilding within virtual exchanges.

Restatement of the Research Questions

This chapter is meant to show why a qualitative case study design is the most appropriate for this research study. This study utilizes a qualitative case study approach to capture the experiences, perceptions, and voices of university administrators, faculty, and students enrolled/involved in global virtual exchange. The qualitative approach consists of interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. These approaches allow university administrators, faculty, and students to share their experiences of the virtual global classroom. This allows for a greater understanding of the participants' personal experiences in global citizenship competency development and peace education.

Research Questions:

- *RQ1: How do administrators at a public institution in the United States perceive their leadership of virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and developing/promoting peace education?*

●*RQ2: How do instructors at a public institution in the United States perceive their participation in virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and developing/promoting peace education?*

●*RQ3: How do students at a public institution in the United States perceive their participation in virtual exchange as a contribution to developing global [citizenship] competencies and to developing/promoting peace education?*

Positionality Statement

My positionality, within this qualitative research case study, has a large impact on the topic I study. As Mertens (2015) states, "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (p. 236). Therefore, it is important to address who I am as the observer and researcher within this study. I identify as a white, male, American citizen by birth, from a middle-class socioeconomic background. I recognize my privilege has enabled me to seek a doctoral education and has allowed me to serve as a college instructor. A role that I have held since 2015, teaching leadership courses, and international-specific and domestic student first-year seminars. From 2018 to 2020, I served as a co-instructor in a virtual global classroom between a public research university in the United States and a private research university in Hong Kong, PolyU.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that insider(emic)/outsider(etic) status can affect the access a researcher has to a population. With the insider being the perspective of the participants and the etic being the views of the researcher (Creswell, 2013). For an outsider, even if access is gained then the level of information the participants are willing to share with the researchers might be limited. As an aspiring researcher who studies internationalization, my positionality as an American citizen can be viewed as an outsider by the students of another country, even if they

are studying at the same university as I myself am as a PhD student. I can also be viewed as an outsider since being an instructor in the course my position is one of perceived power whereas theirs as a student has historically not been one of power.

There have been two ways I have been able to address my positionality with the students I study to gain access. The first has been to share my research efforts and endeavors with my students in my class. This allows for insider/insider access because we are all a part of the same classroom, which can allow for greater trust and access to be established as positionalities between researcher and participants are more closely aligned (Merriam & Tisdel, 2016; Vicars, 2012). The other way that I have used insider/insider access is by being transparent with my university colleagues, both with faculty who are also involved with developing and teaching virtual exchanges, and with university administrators who oversee and/or are involved with virtual exchanges.

My positionality within the context of my participants is as follows. From the administrators, I have worked with one participant while I was an instructor in their department while teaching my virtual exchange. For the rest of the administrator participants, I had no previous relationship prior to the start of the study. For the faculty members in the study, two of the participants were in the same graduate program where I was, while the other members of the academy I did not know before the study. Lastly for the students: I was the instructor for two of the interviewees, while for the other three, I served as their academic advisor. For the autoethnographies collected, I served as the instructor of that specific course.

An Interpretivist Paradigm

The project utilizes an interpretivist paradigm. The purpose of an interpretivist paradigm is to describe, understand, and interpret (Merriam, 2009). I chose the interpretive paradigm for

this study over a constructivist approach because, within the interpretivist paradigm, multiple realities can exist as long as they are context-bounded (Merriam, 2009). If the project was based in a more homogenous environment, then a constructivist approach would have been more appropriate. However, when working in a global space, an interpretative paradigm allows for the existence of multiple truths and realities to exist (Merriam, 2009). This point is very crucial, as within virtual global classrooms where the individuals are participating in the course, truths can vary based on their experiences, nationality, language, etc.

Noddings (2003; 2018) states the importance of multiple truths and dialogue in peace education and building global citizens, to keep open lines of communication with one another, while not imposing one's own values on others but understanding how our treatment can affect one act within a global society. The study uses the theoretical underpinnings of global citizenship and peace education, as outlined in Chapter 2.

Research Design

A Qualitative Case Study

This project employs a qualitative case study approach. Yin (2008) defines a case as "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context" (p. 13). Case study was chosen as the methodology for this project because it has a distinct advantage over other methodologies when asking "how" and "why" questions (Yin, 2008). Moreover, case studies are essential in understanding human experiences (Abramson, 1992).

As noted by Yin (2008) and Creswell (2013), case studies are bounded by a specific phenomenon. The phenomenon this study aims to explore is how virtual exchanges are used to

internationalize higher education within the United States. This case study is bounded at an institutional level of a public institution in the United States. I bound the case institutionally, with subcases consisting of administrators, faculty, and students at the university. The administrators and faculty were bound to those within the institution of UMD. I further bound the students to those who had participated in a virtual exchange course at UMD due to convenience sampling. I oversaw a virtual exchange course which provided me with access to observing the students in the classroom environment being studied. This also provided access to course documents which were used as a source of data for the students' experiences within this study.

Theoretical Frameworks

Two primary frameworks are employed to guide the research in this study. The first is Oxfam's method of global citizen development within education (2015). The second is Noddings' (2003) theory on peace education. Both frameworks that emerged supported me in exploring the research questions by conducting multiple literature reviews of their respective topics (Merriam, 2009). These frameworks shed light on my research in terms of data analysis and discussion of findings.

Data Collection

Creswell (2013) divides data collection into seven categories which he refers to as the data collection circle: 1) Locating the Site/Individuals; 2) Gaining Access and Making Rapport; 3) Sampling; 4) Collecting Data; 5) Recording Information; 6) Resolving Field Issues; and 7) Storing Data. Within this section, I will expand on my application of all seven of Creswell's data collection strategies that are employed for this research project.

Locating the Site/Individuals

The site was bounded at the institutional level. There was one site for this study: a public land grant research institution in the United States, the University of Maryland (UMD). The institution has offered partnerships in a global virtual exchange classroom since 2013. Moreover, the institution has been offering faculty an opportunity to develop undergraduate and graduate courses in a variety of disciplines and has formerly promoted these opportunities with seed grants for course development.

A Virtual Exchange Partnership Example

Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) serves as a good example to illustrate what a partnership is like with UMD. PolyU is a public research university located in the Kowloon district of Hong Kong. Founded in 1937 as the Government Trade School, it was the first post-secondary technical institution in Hong Kong to be publicly funded (PolyU History, 2020). Following World War II PolyU changed its name to Hong Kong Technical College; in 1972 the name again changed to the Hong Kong Polytechnic, and in 1994 it became known as Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU HistoryHistory, 2020).

The 2018/2019 academic year saw 25,827 students enroll at PolyU (PolyU Facts & Figures, 2020). Undergraduate enrollments comprised 14,850 students with 1,213 from Mainland China, Macau, and Taiwan, and 940 students from other overseas countries (PolyU Facts & Figures, 2020). PolyU promotes international experiences for its student body with over 50.3% of PolyU undergraduate students participating in an international learning experience at some point in their program (PolyU Facts & Figures, 2020). Student international learning experiences take place either through an exchange, visit, internship, field trip, experiential learning, or international conference (PolyU Facts & Figures, 2020).

Internationalization at PolyU

There has been a growth in the internationalization efforts at PolyU. The university has established an International Affairs Office to aid and adapt to a growing trend of global integration, part of this initiative included the appointment of a Vice President of International Affairs (Vyvdas, 2018). Additional expansions in internationalization at PolyU can be seen through the creation and implementation of the Taskforce of Internationalization and the International Advisory Board. The Taskforce of Internationalization is responsible for networking with the international community to bring them to PolyU (Vyvdas, 2018). The International Advisory Board serves to enhance academic and student programs which provide an international perspective aligned with university strategic priorities, and the board also serves as an audience for PolyU's President (Vyvdas, 2018).

PolyU's Office of Global Engagement offers students short-term and long-term exchanges with partner universities throughout the globe (Vyvdas, 2018). In addition, PolyU serves as a host for students who are enrolled at one of their 280 overseas partner universities to enroll and study at their Hong Kong campus (PolyU Global Partners, 2020). In 2018/19 PolyU hosted 966 international exchange students (PolyU Facts& Figures, 2020). International students studying abroad at PolyU can participate in a short-term international exchange, as a study abroad experience, or in a summer school (PolyU Exchange & Study Abroad, 2020).

Virtual Exchange at PolyU

Virtual Exchange at PolyU is not as robust as UMD's Global Classroom Initiative. Since 2017, PolyU has offered one course in their Computer Science Department that focuses on international service learning and global leadership. This course has been ongoing each spring since 2018 when the partnership between PolyU and UMD's College of Education Leadership

Studies Minor started. The partnership between UMD and PolyU has led to the expansion of a second course that began in the fall of 2020 between PolyU's Computer Science Department and the Global Engineering Leadership program at UMD.

Partnership Between UMD and PolyU

Course Overview: Global Leadership in a Virtual Context

The international coloration and partnership between UMD and PolyU is not inbound or outbound. Rather the virtual exchange allows for students to participate in an international experience in a virtual third space which they can access from wherever they have internet capabilities. The virtual exchange between UMD and PolyU was first established in 2017. It was a partnership between the Computer Science Department at PolyU and the College of Education's Leadership Studies program at the University of Maryland. The course, known as "Global Leadership in a Virtual Context," aims for students to explore socially responsible leadership in a global context. Throughout the semester they seek to respond to the question, "How do we learn to understand, analyze, and address complicated global problems while working with highly diverse groups of people and perspectives?"

Student enrollments for Global Leadership in a Virtual Context are capped at 75 students total, 25 undergraduate students for UMD, and 50 undergraduate students for PolyU. The course is open to all undergraduate students at UMD where the students at PolyU must complete an application process to be able to enroll in this online experience. Each university oversees its own students' enrollment into the course. The faculty for the course consists of teaching teams of two instructors from each university. Two instructors from UMD are the instructors on record at Maryland and two professors serve as the instructors on record from PolyU.

The students from UMD and PolyU met face-to-face five times throughout the semester at 7:00 pm on Fridays for UMD and 8:00 am Saturdays for PolyU in a formal synchronous virtual classroom setting as well as complete online modules during other weeks (see Table 3 for course outline). Collaborative sessions consisted of UMD and PolyU meeting virtually. Virtual courses for UMD students are noted below and stagger from PolyU since UMD met solely with their students. Before the first joint virtual class students are introduced to modules on global and socially responsible leadership, and cross-cultural competencies, they are given an introduction to the course outline, which is listed below:

Table 3 Timeline and Course Topics

Week	**UMD only**	**Collaborative**
1	UMD Only Virtual Class 1 Intro to the course (Pre assessment for IC and research consent forms)	
2	Intercultural competencies	Virtual class 2 (PolyU Virtual Class 1)
3	Intercultural leadership	
4	Socially responsible leadership	
5	Design cycle: Empathize	Virtual class 3 (PolyU Virtual Class 2)
6	Design: Define	Virtual class 4 (PolyU Virtual Class 3)
7	**Supporting PolyU Project**	
8	SPRING BREAK	
9	Design: Ideate	Virtual class 5 (PolyU Virtual Class 4)
10	Work week	

11	PolyU/UMD Project Presentation	Virtual class 6 (PolyU Virtual Class 5)
12	UMD Only Virtual Class 7 Introduction to Research Writing	
13	April 23 - Paper Proposal Due These 3 modules flexible: Peace Building Global Citizenship Global Leadership	
14		
15		
16	Last day of class May 11	Final Papers Due Friday May 14th

Adapted from the HESI418V 2021 Syllabus

The blended learning virtual exchange course centered around student service learning with students proposing a collaborative project at the end of the term. The first virtual class between UMD and PolyU students introduced students to the course topic of "working in global teams" and students were divided into their working groups for the term. For the course, project working groups or teams consist of at least two UMD students and at least three students from PolyU. The disparity of having an equal number of students from each university represented in each group is due to the different enrollment caps from each of the institutions.

Virtual classes take place through an online conferencing platform that allows students to log into class from any location as long as they have internet access. Each virtual class is broken up into three parts. During the first part of class, students are introduced to a weekly topic that is introduced with a course module they complete before the class. In the second part of the class, students are given time to work and get to know each other in their groups. Each student group is given a virtual breakout room in which they can work collaboratively together. The final part of each virtual class consists of students coming back into the main room, where the instructors can talk about and discuss learning outcomes for that specific class topic. In addition to the time

students are given in the breakout rooms with their team members students are also encouraged to work with their team to establish communication guidelines through a working contract. This allows for each team to create their responsibilities rather than be assigned by the faculty. Part of the contract is to have students establish how they should communicate with one another and establish additional meeting times outside of the seven total hours they are given by the instructional team. The student groups must navigate time differences, cultural barriers, different education styles, and group work to complete their group projects.

Once the collaborative portion of the course has been completed in week 11, the UMD students are tasked with completing a solo paper proposal. The paper project is a mini-autoethnography in which the students are given topics on global citizenship, global leadership, and peacebuilding. The UMD students can focus on one of the three topics or combine two or three. Students use a combination of personal reflection, experiences with the course readings, and research to complete their autoethnographies on their topics.

Gaining Access and Making Rapport

One of the key aspects of enabling easy data collection is gaining access and building rapport with participants in the study (Creswell, 2013). I have been a co-instructor for a global classroom course since 2019 and as a university administrator since 2018. This has allowed me access to the students as an instructor and as an administrator they have worked with. I have shared my research endeavors with my fellow global classroom instructors and university administrators from UMD and they have expressed their support for my data collection. Additionally, I have been able to assist UMD faculty members in the creation of their virtual exchanges, serving as a faculty mentor.

While these identities of serving as a co-instructor as well as the University of administrator have allowed me to increase access to specific populations it is also important to note that I have also experienced challenges with recruitment as well within the study. One of the difficulties I had with recruitment in this study was at the initial stages of efforts to recruit students. My initial study was going to look at solely student experiences participating in a virtual exchange between two institutions.

While I had reached out to students within this virtual exchange at the university, many of the students who initially expressed interest in being part of the study, including going through initial email contacts and communication, but once I did a follow-up to schedule the interviews, only three students from the course that I was teaching were willing to be participants. With the previous potential participants not returning emails and failing to communicate any follow-up, I had to make a major redesign on the study and decided to expand to not only just look at students' experiences and voices within the participation of a virtual exchange but also looking at faculty who teach these courses as well as the instructors who oversee them. I took action to share my research endeavors with the administrators and faculty who have been vital to my success in recruitment for this project. The more I shared with them about the project I was engaging in for my dissertation study, the more willing they were to share their work about virtual exchange and the Global Classrooms Initiative. Hence, my study took shapes as it is now presented.

Sampling

This study utilizes purposeful sampling. My use of purposeful sampling allowed for the unique population, such as the participants of virtual global classrooms, to be examined (Merriam, 2009). The purposeful sample consisted of individuals from UMD which included,

students enrolled or have been enrolled in a virtual exchange course, faculty who teach, have taught, or have been approved to develop a virtual exchange, and the university administrators who oversee and/or work with virtual exchanges for their departments, colleges, or for the university. Inclusion criteria consisted of the following:

1. Administrators included must have been overseeing or associated with virtual exchange at UMD.
2. Faculty participating in this study have to be currently, or formerly, teaching or developing a virtual exchange at UMD.
3. Students participating in this study must be enrolled or previously enrolled in a virtual global classroom at UMD.

The sample size for this study consisted of 14 participants from UMD. Specifically, five administrators, three faculty members, five students, and one individual identified both as a faculty member and administrator. Participants completed a one-hour interview which was conducted virtually and participants had to consent to the interviews being recorded. Participants for the study were all identified as over the age of 18 at the start of the study. Participants in the interview read and signed a consent form to be eligible for participation in this study.

Participant Profile

TABLE 1 Participant Profile

Participants (Pseudonym)	**Student/Faculty/Administrator**	**Discipline**
Martha	Administrator	Humanities
Boyd	Administrator	University
Mary	Administrator	University
Sasha	Administrator	University

Joyce	Faculty/Admin-Tenure Track	Humanities
Rachel	Faculty-Non-Tenure Track	Humanities
Michael	Faculty-Non-Tenure Track	STEM
Grover	Faculty- Non-Tenure Track	Humanities
Stephanie	Faculty- Tenure Track	STEM
Arica	Student-Undergraduate	Humanities
Uzair	Student-Undergraduate	STEM
Danielle	Student-Graduate	STEM
Adam	Student-Graduate	STEM
Valeria	Student-Graduate	STEM

The sample has expanded as the study progressed. The initial sample of the study was going to be bound to a single virtual exchange between a university in the United States and a university in Hong Kong, PolyU. Initial recruitment efforts by the research resulted in a verbal commitment from four students from the American institution and an additional five from the Hong Kong institution. My teaching partners from Hong Kong also sent a recruitment email to the students about their virtual exchange. However, when I reached out to the students who expressed interest in participating in the study via email to schedule and confirm interviews, there was little to no response, with only two of the American students agreeing to be participants. It is important to note that recruitment was conducted during the height of COVID-19. I was therefore forced to evolve the study sample into its present form, with all participants being from the US, specifically UMD. Recruitment efforts for the study shifted from students from a single virtual exchange between UMD and PolyU to expanding the case to an entire institution with cases of administrators, instructors, and students solely from UMD.

Collecting Data

Data collection consisted of three different strategies for this project: interviews, observations, and document analysis. My use of all three forms of data collection was needed for this research study as they will allow for triangulation thus increasing the trustworthiness of the research while addressing threats to internal validity (Merriam, 2009). Data were collected during the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 academic years.

Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured. I selected the use of semi-structured interviews for this study as opposed to unstructured interviews to ensure there was a level of consistency from interview to interview (Corbin et al., 2015). Similar to structured interviews, semi-structured interviews allow for the use of an interview guide to ask questions about particular topics (Corbin et al., 2015; Merriam, 2009). However, unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews also allowed me the flexibility to go deeper into an emerging topic and to create new questions based on the participants' responses (Corbin et al., 2015; Merriam, 2009). I conducted a total of 14 interviews virtually, with interviews from five students, three faculty members, five administrators, and one individual who identified as a faculty member and administrator from UMD. Each of the virtual semi-structured interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

The interviews were held through video conferencing software, Zoom™. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim using transcription services. To ensure confidentiality I ensured that each of the students, faculty, and administrator participants had been given pseudonyms (Baez, 2002). After transcription, as the investigator, I de-identified the transcript by redacting any personal information (e.g., names of persons and places). I utilized memos during the interview process which I wrote directly following the interviews, and while watching

the Zoom recordings of the interviews (Merriam, 2009). These memos were both personal, where I described how I felt and my perceptions of the interviewee, as well as analytic. The transcriptions and memos were also uploaded into NVivo for data analysis.

Observations

Observations of the virtual global classroom were conducted and consisted of field notes when the virtual classrooms were in a synchronous session. Sessions were held using the online video conferencing software Zoom™. I was able to conduct four classroom observations consisting of sessions lasting between 1 hour to 2 hours, which were used for data collection. The benefit of observing the virtual global classroom is that I could take notes on when and how students interacted with instructors present in the main classroom as well as in breakout rooms. The Zoom™ breakout rooms allow for multiple virtual spaces for students to work on their projects away from other members of the class. The breakout rooms consisted of students working in groups socializing, working on assignments, and bonding, without other instructors present. Course document analysis was conducted as well.

Serving as an instructor in virtual exchange courses between UMD and PolyU and experiencing direct interactions with students and other teachers, I was both an observer and a participant in this study. Being an observer as well as a participant means that my research agenda is known, and the information given by the participants is controlled by the participants (Merriam et al., 2016). So, while joining virtual sessions held, I was also observing the classroom settings and interacting with the participants publicly (Merriam, 2009). By using the observer as participant observation technique, I was known to the participants hopefully increasing the trust factor for the interview phase of the study. The context of the field notes were noted by not fully analyzed for the study.

Document Analysis

Document analysis allows for access to historical information from the course (McNamara, 2008). There are several different types of documents that I analyzed for my study. Several of the classes in the virtual classroom study have established Facebook™ groups and online spaces as a way for the students to communicate with each other (Simon, et al., in press). The Facebook groups were looked at and data was collected from one of the courses, but it was not analyzed in depth for this study. I also collected course documents such as the syllabus and assignment instructions, as well as materials on the online learning platform, and students' assignments including reflection journals.

Additionally, data was collected from student assignments from the virtual exchange courses between UMD and PolyU that I taught. The UMD students from this virtual exchange were required to complete an autoethnography paper. For this autoethnography assignment, the UMD students tied in research from the course reading materials as frameworks for their assignment, as well as self-reflection from their experience within the course. Students were allowed to choose and focus their assignment on one of three topics: global competencies, global leadership, and/or peacebuilding. As a part of this assignment, the 13 students enrolled in the UMD portion of the virtual exchange course completed weekly journals. I made sure that the course document analysis was included and approved through the initial IRB submission for this study. The journals and autoethnography that I collected are analyzed for this study. All of the course documents stated prior were uploaded into NVivo for data analysis. This group of data was treated as their own subcase within the student section in chapter four, to bring additional context to the research. No student identifiers were used for the autoethnographies.

Recording Information

Observation protocols were used to record notes (Creswell, 2013). These protocols consisted of using descriptive and reflective observational notes. My use of descriptive notes has allowed for the recording of and descriptions of the activities the students are taking part in (Creswell, 2013). My use of reflective notes allowed me to reflect and think about classroom learning. I also used reflective notes to establish a summary of conclusions and develop future themes in the data analysis stages (Creswell, 2013).

Resolving Field Issues

As Creswell (2013) addresses, field issues are bound to arise when collecting qualitative data. One of the issues that I encountered during the study was my ability to gain permission from students to conduct interviews. My positionality within the project as a co-instructor for the course has been noted previously. Students may have seen me as an outsider and worry that I could use their answers against them when I was grading. I strived to overcome this issue by telling the students that their grades were not impacted by choosing to participate or not in the study. For example, interviews for the study were not conducted until after final grades were submitted for the participants who were enrolled in the course I taught. The issue did persist with student recruitment, possible based on a sense of uncertainty from the students about whether there could be an impact on their grades. As a result, from the course I taught, only two of the 13 students chose to participate. With a lack of student responses to the study, the study was expanded to include students beyond this course, and I also opted to take a holistic look at the university's virtual exchange with the inclusion of students from other courses, faculty members, as well as university administrators. While I did not recruit additional students from the course I taught for interviews, I was able to increase my interviewees from two to 14 through the

enrollment of university administrators, faculty, and students who participated in other virtual exchanges at UMD.

Data Analysis

The data with which I conducted the analysis included the deidentified interview data, interview memos, and course documents. The interviews that I conducted were virtually recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Transcripts and fieldnotes were uploaded into NVivo and I utilized an initial and focused coding approach (Charmaz, 2006). With initial coding, data is compared against data, actions are recorded, and codes should be short, open, and precise (Charmaz, 2006).

Two approaches were important to keep in mind for the data analysis phase: 1) analyzing within case data and 2) searching for cross-case patterns (Eisenhardt, 1989). As patterns were identified, categories were created. Once multiple categories were created during the coding process, I wrote analytical memos to make sense of the categories of how the categories reflected a theme. Additionally, these categories can be used to better understand alignment with previous literature, which allowed the researcher to look at ingroup similarities during the analysis phase. For example, groupings of categories such as students' backgrounds with engagement in a third space and experiences around global citizenship could allow for certain students to be grouped into one category while others without these exposures or experiences to be grouped in another. Comparisons across groups/data sources allow me to see whether students have different outcomes than those of their faculty or administrator counterparts at this institution.

Strategies for Trustworthiness

To implement strategies of trustworthiness, I used multiple sources. A lack of internal validity can be a threat to the credibility of my research project. Merriam et al. (2016) define internal validity as how one matches the findings to reality. One way to address internal validity threats is through member checks. This ensured that the data were not misrepresented by the participants (Cho & Trent, 2006). Member checks can take place at various stages and continuously during the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985): during data collection if clarification was needed, during data analysis, and after the write-up of the findings to ensure credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I completed member checks after data collection. I sent copies of the interview transcripts to each of the participants. Each participant had the opportunity to send back amended copies of their transcribed interviews if they chose.

External validity refers to the extent one can apply the findings of the study to another experience (Merriam et al., 2016). To help ensure external validity I used peer debriefing (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988) to go over my findings with a colleague who also researches virtual exchange classrooms as well as the members of my committee. Additionally, thick description was used when writing the findings to inform the reader about transferability (Merriam et al., 2016).

Providing context for the phenomenon is vital in establishing transferability. Shenton (2004) highlights key information that should be provided to allow for possible transferability "a) the number of organizations taking part in the study and where they are based; b) any restrictions in the type of people who contributed data; c) the number of participants involved in the fieldwork; d) the data collection methods that were employed; e) the number and length of the data collection sessions; f) the period over which the data was collected" (p. 70).

Chapter 4

Findings: Impacts of Virtual Exchanges on Global Citizenship Development and Peace Education

This chapter provides an overview of participants' perceptions of global citizenship development and peace education while being involved with virtual exchange(s). I used the data to describe each of the participant groups' experiences. I will start by describing the university administrators' experiences. This is followed by the experiences of the faculty and facilitators of the virtual exchanges. Lastly, I will describe the experiences of the student participants. In addition to the student cases, the student section will also include a subsection containing data following the document analysis of student experiences from a single virtual exchange. It is important to note that all of the cases and subcases do not all have the same categories.

Administrators' Experiences with International Virtual Exchanges

In this section, I will provide a background of each of the four administrators (Boyd, Martha, Sasha, and Mary) as subcases of this study. Within each of their subcases, I will discuss their experiences with categories 'Addressing Access and Equity', 'Facilitators for Global Understanding', 'Innovation Serving as a Shift in Priorities', and 'Peace Education.'

Boyd

Boyd serves as a university administrator in his current role with the institution. He has worked in international education since 2001. He has served in leadership roles both in study abroad and global affairs at two other land grant institutions before joining his current institution in 2012. He has spearheaded international collaborations throughout his career. Boyd has a goal of assisting units and faculty to create research collaborations, which led to his previous institution and UMD becoming a part of the Universitas 21 consortium and expanding COIL

towards having a more project-based emphasis on virtual exchange, known as the Global Classrooms Initiative.

Addressing Access and Equity

Equity issues within international education are prevalent at all levels of an institution, this is no different within virtual exchanges. They don't just plague the students who participate in the virtual exchanges, there are large inequities that also impact the faculty members and their global partners. Boyd expanded on the importance of attempting to create equity with the virtual exchanges' global partners and addressed the challenges that exist within creating these virtual exchange environments. He said, "It will never be a level playing field, but we have to at least provide the conditions for success for both partners to engage with each other equally." Boyd goes on to highlight how UMD has tried to create conditions for success.

There have been several ways that UMD has tried to increase access addressing the equity gap with their global partners. One of the primary ways UMD has addressed this gap has been through sharing its learning management software (LMS) platforms with institutions that do not have the budget to purchase their own., Boyd described how UMD is sharing the technology that the university utilizes and said: "You may have to require some sharing of technologies to the extent that [the university administrators] can. We have been doing that, we've been allowing some of these students to access things like Canvas, but it's a challenge and it's an ongoing challenge." The additional use of the university's online learning platform, Canvas, allows students from each institutional partner for the exchange to access course content in the same way as the students at UMD. However, it does not consider the digital divide that may exist between the institutions, such as internet access.

Facilitators for Global Understanding

The importance of why the university invests so much into its Global Classrooms Initiatives across its curriculum is a key element in Boyd's vision of virtual exchange and internationalization efforts at UMD. Boyd stressed the importance of their version of virtual exchange to go beyond creating a lesser version of a study abroad. He explained by saying that virtual exchanges have been seen by many in the international education community as an inferior substitution for international learning, with the gold standard being in-person 'study abroad.' Disagreeing with this notion he stated: "It occurred to [the university administration] that we could provide a low cost and accessible global learning opportunities that would [provide] powerful experiences."

Virtual exchanges that are a part of the UMD Global Classroom Initiative incorporate project-based learning in a virtual global learning context. Project-based learning includes pairing students from different areas of the world that otherwise would not have been possible to engage with study abroad (e.g., due to travel bans and the Covid lockdowns). Boyd shares that he perceives virtual exchanges as a more important form of international learning than a study abroad experience for students. The crux of this ideology is that "most of these Global Classrooms are taking place in low-income countries and in places where most study abroad students do not go to, and in countries where US students couldn't even go to because of Department of State restrictions." Boyd describes how virtual exchanges expand access for students to learn and gain global awareness, understanding global perspectives with cultures that would be otherwise near inaccessible for college students. Furthermore, a virtual exchange course expands the students' abilities to address issues around social injustice, which goes beyond local concerns and advances toward global social justice concerns. As Boyd raises the

question, "What voices have we not heard? And then how do we create project-based experiences that advance towards global justice?". For example, a virtual exchange within Architecture utilized project-based learning to have the UMD faculty and students design an urban project in Baghdad, Iraq while the Iraqi faculty and students used Washington, DC as a design site. The global student projects within the virtual exchanges allow for students to become part of a co-created common agenda thus increasing their awareness of global justice issues by hearing different perspectives and working on an international team together UMD offers signature courses. While showing there is still room for faculty to create spaces that advance global justice for those with silenced voices.

Innovation Serving as a Shift in Priorities

The virtual exchanges have enabled a reimagination of global student learning outcomes within the university. Boyd explained that his perspective shifted on how the students can achieve greater global learning outcomes when UMD switched its approach to emphasize the Global Classrooms Initiative project-based learning. UMD chose to utilize a project-based pedagogy because it emphasizes the co-creation of a shared learning outcome/experience within a virtual exchange. Boyd feels that students participating in a virtual exchange have set learning outcomes that are facilitated by faculty members to enhance their levels of global understanding and competence. While within study abroad, participants do not have faculty driving an overall learning outcome of global competence for the entire global learning experience. He feels that students who study abroad do not prioritize these global learning outcomes when they should be at the forefront of international education experiences. Using project-based learning as a pedagogy has allowed virtual exchanges at UMD to gain a foothold and have their lane within internationalization offerings at the university. Study abroad and virtual exchange can co-exist

since the outcomes are different. Virtual exchange expands the idea of the student learning outcomes for global competence. He stated,

> "What we're now trying to explore is can we flip this on its head and say, let's begin with the student learning outcomes. Well, let's enunciate some broad student learning outcomes that can then be tailored and made more specific to various academic units. So, if we give broad learning outcomes that talk about, you know, global awareness or global perspectives or global engagement, how would those be adapted within a certain unit."

Virtual exchanges prioritize project-based learning within the global classroom initiatives, which used to be one of the learning components, but now as the focus, it has transformed the overall impact on the students' learning outcomes. Boyd said: "That's a very different model. It sounds subtle, but it's really quite radical, I think."

Faculty are charged with being the center of facilitating innovative changes in global curriculum. Boyd explained their perspective of faculty engagement within the space:

> "What an innovative teaching model [Global Classroom Initiative], what a refreshing energizing teaching model to work on real world projects with student, with teaching with someone from abroad, from a different place. They have their own global learning experience, teaching students from a very different place, especially these students who are in really different cultures than ours."

The innovation through the Global Classroom Initiative's use of project-based learning for virtual exchanges provides a different lens for the faculty and a unique learning opportunity for the students. With set learning outcomes, faculty can design projects that provide students with a different level of learning experience than was previously conceived in a domestic educational environment.

Peace Education

Virtual exchanges allow students access to work with individuals from countries that otherwise would not be possible. Boyd believes that exposure is critical, and he expands this notion by providing an example of students from two nations that used to be at war with each other.

> "Think about this, you know, let's think about a Global Classroom in Afghanistan. Of course, it all changed because of the Taliban taking (over the country again), but our students never could have gone to Afghanistan, and they probably would not have wanted to do that. And they certainly couldn't. And at the same time, those students at the American University of Afghanistan could not come here. So that is so powerful. We are [providing] through these Global Classrooms; we are not just providing sort of an experience to scale up global learning participation. We are providing our students and students in really distressed environments to have a global learning experience, a powerful one that they never would've been able to do."

Thus, virtual learning provides students with the ability to understand and work with someone from a culture that is vastly different from their own. Moreover, it provides students with contact and an increased knowledge of individuals of that culture. As Noddings (2003) states individual with a working knowledge of someone from a culture that is vastly different from their own are less likely to want to cause harm towards them in the future. That is extremely powerful, especially when individuals from both sides of the virtual exchanges have been engaged in a decades-long war with one another.

Another area Boyd was very focused on emphasizing was the potential for virtual exchanges to bring individuals together to solve larger world and global issues. From his

perspective as a university administrator his true emphasis and vision for virtual exchanges manifest in this statement: "If we think about aligning our global learning strategies around injustice or inequities, even around, along issues of race, that's global. That's global. And the same thing so we could create really experiential models that could be centered around these issues, grand challenges, and social justice. That's what we're trying to achieve." This vision aligns with Nodding's (2003 & 2018) view on how one's actions can impact the global society. It also aligns with her view towards how education needs to cultivate a global citizenship mindset, going beyond one's own needs and focusing their efforts and emphasis towards the needs and contributions of a global society (Noddings, 2012).

Martha

Martha started at UMD in 2013 as a PhD student studying student affairs. During her time as a PhD student, she worked as an instructor and a coordinator within her current department. Following the completion of her PhD in 2017, she transitioned into a post-doctorate role for a year and a half. Then, she was recruited back to her previous department at UMD to oversee the academic program offerings. Her passion within her field was evident, stating how she felt when she was recruited back to work in this department: "I mean [this] is at the heart of, of that's what I love. That's why I got here." Since 2019, she has been serving as the managing director within her academic department. She oversees co-curricular and academic offerings and several of the courses within her program are a part of the Global Classrooms Initiative.

Facilitators for Global Understanding

Martha, who by her own admission, does not identify as a global educator. However, her role has her serving a vital and pivotal part in supporting globalization within her department because she facilitates the selection and hiring of non-tenure track instructors, usually graduate

assistants to teach her program's virtual exchanges. She understands the importance of providing assistance and facilitating a collaborative relationship between the UMD instructors and their international partners. She said, "I'm not an expert on intercultural communication or intercultural like partnerships or teamwork, but I do know enough about organizational culture to know that context matters in partnerships like this." Her knowledge of UMD and her department's history working with international partners allows her to be able to support her instructors, allowing them to thrive in their virtual exchange endeavors.

As an administrator, Martha views her role as supporting the relationships between the faculty and their international partners to make the virtual exchanges a success and to achieve their goal of facilitating global understanding through their courses. She stated: "I do what I can to provide the instructors with a really good understanding of who we're working with, what the point of the class is, what are the learning outcomes."

Additionally, in her role, Martha serves as a relationship facilitator, coordinator, and builder between her instructors and the partner institutions on an annual basis. She meets with her faculty ahead of each term to make sure they understand the cultural importance surrounding these special courses. She explains, "And, when you layer in, when you layer in the difference in, in culture and assumptions and, and customs around how you engage with people and what an appropriate relationship looks like, and all those things." This is a key cog in the success of the courses being able to continue year after year and it also highlights that global understanding within the virtual exchanges goes beyond that among the students. It also highlights the administrators' understanding of the need to make sure their faculty and instructors have cultural competencies in place before they go into the classroom.

Sasha

Sasha started working in international higher education at a Land Grant Institution in New England. She transitioned to her current institution at UMD in 2013 and has been in international education for most of her career. She has overseen programs for study abroad, international students, and scholars, and now works very closely with the Global Classrooms Initiative. Sasha is very passionate about the Global Classrooms; she shared that the motivation for introducing virtual exchange to UMD came from the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The lessons learned from the MOOCs allowed the university to expand that knowledge into the creation of distance learning with international educational programming.

Facilitators for Global Understanding

The motivation from the lessons learned from the MOOCs and ten years of virtual exchange has allowed Sasha to consolidate her view that virtual exchanges can serve as a powerful learning tool. They allow students to expand their global knowledge while participating in a Global Classroom Initiative course. She explains: "[Virtual exchanges] give really good context, kind of like this notion of like trying to create like global citizens within this space. And coming up with different projects that are looking at global issues or complexity within a specific discipline." As an administrator she carries a deep passion for virtual exchanges, believing they carry the capability to foster the development of global citizens, at both the faculty and student level, as different individuals are brought together who can share their local knowledge while trying to examine and explore global issues.

Being able to come together to solve complex global issues is vital. Sasha stated, "As a society, how are we going to solve these bigger global issues? It's not going to be like, one country that's going through and solving this, it has to be like a joint effort." An increased level

of communication across countries is needed to solve issues. This aligns with Nodding's (2003) idea of caring where increased dialogue and open lines of communication allow for levels of care and understanding, while not imposing the views of one's values and culture forcefully on another.

This level of understanding is needed across the curriculum not just in a single course or area of study. Sasha expands on the need to be able for an increase in virtual exchange offerings at UMD for global understanding stating: "So, I think even just like embedding that throughout any courses like, the dream would be like [a] magic wand scenario- be able to embed this in every single course if possible. Which should be amazing, or please give students the opportunity, each student the opportunity to experience this at least in one course during their degree, right?" While most of the university administrators do not teach these virtual exchange courses specifically, Sasha describes her role as being a conduit for the faculty to develop these courses and to also promote students' enrollment in virtual exchange courses. Moreover, the university administrators who oversee the virtual exchanges have a role to advocate for virtual exchange to higher level administration of the university, such as the provost, department heads, chairs, and the president, in the promotion of expanding equitable global learning through virtual exchange courses.

Addressing Access and Equity

Addressing equity issues cannot rely on a one-size-fits-all approach within virtual exchanges. Each partner institution and class has specific needs and goals. The university, specifically the Office of International Affairs, does offer development grants to faculty to develop virtual exchanges under the Global Classroom Initiative. For example, the Office of International Affairs provides a $10,000 grant and expects the academic departments to provide

the faculty with an additional $2,000 to be paid out over three years to the faculty who develop the course. The grants do not serve as bonuses or additional payments to the UMD faculty teaching courses in the Global Classrooms Initiative. Initially, the university limited the grant funds for allocation to the development and facilitation of a new virtual exchange course. Sasha stated, "We were very strict about this is for our faculty, for our costs and you can't really transfer any of this. This is from the provost's office, supporting our faculty, and incentivizing them to do this work. Well, it wasn't incentivizing people to do the work, but people could not do the work without other people right?" Without faculty teaching the courses there would be no access for the students to be able to participate in a virtual exchange at UMD. The grant funding opportunities the administration provided UMD faculty to develop virtual exchange are crucial to the success of the Global Classrooms Initiative.

The initial grant funds supported the launch of virtual exchanges at UMD and their sustainability for three years. As faculty utilized these grant funds, they identified and expressed challenges to the university administration. Faculty voiced the need to increase the flexibility in the use of the funds to address equity gaps between their UMD portion of the virtual exchange and that of their virtual exchange partners. While the faculty expressed the challenges the university administration has sought measures to mitigate some of the stressors around this issue. Sasha explained: "Again, this was all sort of faculty-led. So, allowing them to identify the needs of the conversations, what would their partner need, you know, try to share that little funding that we were able to provide." With the faculty providing feedback to the university administration the need to increase the flexibility towards the uses of the grant funds in different ways, such as providing funding to the partner institution for their exchanges, brought change within how the

grant funds could be utilized to address some of the equity gaps within the virtual exchange partnerships.

Another way they have attempted to address this issue of funding is to seek outside support for faculty and their international partners. This includes raising the awareness of the partner institutions to seek out if they are able and willing to provide additional financial support. Or as Sasha put it, "…to make sure that there is enough awareness at the partner institution, that our counterparts there now… lobbying for resources at the partner institution, or for, at least recognition of faculty counterparts' efforts in connecting with us." Being able to address the funding issues on both sides would allow for an equal partnership, but not necessarily an equitable partnership, as funding and revenue streams can vary greatly depending on the global partners involved in the virtual exchange. The equity issue is especially acute with universities with larger endowments and funds from wealthier countries being able to afford support for virtual exchanges in the form of finances while an institution from poorer countries with fewer financial resources cannot.

Peace Education

Administrators played a large role in promoting peace education within the institution via virtual exchange. Sasha shared that while Boyd was on a business trip to Israel with a former president of UMD he struck a connection with a colleague from Tel Aviv University. Upon his return, he connected with the director of the Center for International Development and Conflict Management at UMD asking if they would be interested in being the pilot for the Global Classrooms Initiative. While the course topics dealt with conflict management Sasha also had to work on conflict management between the two institutions. When I asked Sasha to further describe how peace education became a part of the course, she expounded that peace education

was not an intended learning outcome for the students. However, because this specific virtual exchange dealt with conflict management students worked together to co-create solutions. Thus, Sasha mentioned that principles of peace education can exist within a virtual exchange, however, in this example it happened organically. Principles of peace education have been a foundational component of the virtual exchanges within the Global Classrooms Initiative since the very beginning even though it is an unintentional learning outcome.

Mary

Mary started at UMD in 2019 working in the Office of International Affairs. She has worked in study abroad assisting faculty develop their programs. The COVID-19 pandemic called for a reimagination of study abroad and a transition within her department to virtual exchanges because physical student mobility was no longer a possibility. Thus, all of the study abroad programs at UMD, similar to the majority of the country, ceased to have an employee need at the same capacity pre-pandemic. This caused Mary to pivot her career into assisting with the Global Classrooms Initiative. This is when she was exposed to virtual exchange programs for the first time.

Facilitators for Global Understanding

Mary recognized that there is potential for the expansion of global learning, but also felt that there is still work to be done to enhance how students are recruited and course offerings to be scheduled to increase the potential student pool. Mary expanded on this notion to widen the availability of virtual exchanges to the university writ large. Feeling that there currently are not enough virtual exchanges offered across the institution, she stated, "Maybe I, I haven't done enough quite with this space...promoting courses to students, encourage faculty to consider making a global [general education] credit designation for their courses, which broadens the pool

of students. You know, you're a faculty member in X department, but is the topic of your course applicable to students from a different discipline? And how can you integrate [global] perspectives into [their] particular course?" This awareness is key in creating more visible spaces for students to participate, but also for faculty to innovate. As an administrator, being able to bring awareness to departments and faculty is key to the expansion of global education for the students at the university. They serve as the lynchpin in being able to enhance the offerings of virtual exchanges.

Addressing Access and Equity

Mary expressed how equity is viewed in the field of international education from the lens of the student experience. Access to international education without the extra costs associated was a key point she addressed when discussing what virtual exchanges provided their student population. Mary shared,

> In a way these Global Classrooms and the courses that happen virtually have eliminated that question of, how can international learning be accessible to students, right? And so that's one thing that I really came to value working in that space, because minus the underlying hierarchy that I think no one's willing to really say explicitly, there is, you know, quantifiable evidence that these courses meet many of those learning outcomes and objectives for cultural competency essentially. And students pay the same as if they were taking a regular course on campus. They don't have to worry: do I need to pay this extra money for a passport? Or dealing with your family who may not be open to it, you know. So that was one part that I really loved about being a part of the Global Classrooms.

The ability to access an opportunity for global education with the same ease as a regular course provides students with unprecedented levels of global learning. It allows students to not have to deal with specific challenges that surround study abroad, such as finances, mobility issues, or family buy-in.

Innovation in Emergency and Prospect of a Shift in Priorities

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed for continued innovation within international education through the use of virtual exchanges. Mary stated, "The field of international education is in a rebuilding phase. I think COVID has maybe created the space to move from talking about things just being, like, radically experimental. “She addressed it cautiously with the concerns of the growth of virtual spaces during this time being a possible temporary holding space for international education until student mobility can return.

I hope that as we begin to move past COVID we just won't go back to kind of putting all our eggs in one basket and saying, this one model of travel is the gold standard, but there are all of these different ways to achieve, you know, what those missions are. And so that, you know, as a professional, that's just my hope. You know that these different modalities are going to be given the same, um, recognition in respect and resource that it deserves, you know, that they deserve.

COVID-19 has provided the university with opportunities to expand its innovation of international education and global learning through virtual exchanges. While their shift in global learning can be seen as temporary, there is hope amongst the administrators, that not only was virtual exchange and their Global Classrooms Initiative successful during an emergency, a time of need, but that the global classrooms can also be successful beyond COVID-19 provided the resources.

Faculties Experiences with International Virtual Exchanges

In this section, I will provide a background of each of the five faculty members/ virtual exchange instructors (Joyce, Michael, Rachel, Grover, and Stephanie) as faculty subcases of this study. Findings from data analyses of the faculty subcases generated the following five categories: 'Motivation', 'Support of University Leadership', 'Increasing Partnership Equity', 'Equitable Global Learning Spaces for Students', 'Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes' and 'Peace as an Unintended Outcome.' I will describe the categories that relate to each of the individual faculty/instructor subcases.

Joyce

Joyce is a tenured faculty member who also oversees global initiatives for her college, part of which include virtual exchanges. She is originally from a Nordic country and came to the United States to attend a graduate program with the intent of returning home following her degree. However, after meeting her husband she stayed and has carved out her career in the United States. Before joining the faculty at UMD in 2007, she worked at institutions in New York and California. Her hybrid role of being an administrator and a faculty member within her department came as a part of her promotion and tenure from an Assistant Professor to an Associate Professor. It was around this time she started to seek and reflect on other avenues on how to give back to the university. Joyce has an extensive background internationally with her research endeavors, she viewed virtual exchange as a way to tap into her knowledge of different languages as well as to make alignment of her current work with her research in European nations.

Motivation for Virtual Exchange

Creating study abroad courses for students has been one of Joyce's passions. She has participated in education abroad as a participant, as well as taking students on study abroad trips. She shared that these global experiences can be life-changing opportunities for their participants. However, she felt there were limitations in this mode of internationalization. She reflected: "Not everybody has the interest or the capability to do a mobility course," with financial and other barriers for global learning to be accessible and open to all. Moreover, she is driven and feels that as educators both administrators and faculty must work together to open global learning opportunities for all. She stated: "It's really important to also make global opportunities available for our students that either don't want to or can't, take advantage of those opportunities. And I think that that can be done in a really meaningful way." The pandemic played a large role in Joyce and the colleagues in her department expanding their international offerings to their students beyond the then-discontinued study abroad. The department, as a result of COVID-19, allowed her and her colleagues to tap into their existing international connections and take advantage of the unique offering of virtual exchanges, specifically expanding on existing courses and creating new ones.

The necessity of creating more equitable learning spaces for their students to have a global educational experience during the COVID-19 pandemic inspired Joyce and her colleagues to be innovative. As a result of the pandemic, her department and university administration have allowed them to work with partners abroad to develop additional global resources for their students within their courses.

Equitable Global Learning Spaces for Students

Joyce highlighted the reason why she and her department put such a large emphasis on virtual exchange. She wants her department to expand on access to virtual exchange given the equity that virtual exchange provides compared to that of a study abroad experience. Financial burdens can play a large piece in students' abilities to study abroad as Joyce previously stated. Joyce emphasized this point stating, "I think it's really important to also make global opportunities available for our students that either don't want to or can't take advantage of [mobility] opportunities. And I think that [virtual exchanges] can be done in a really meaningful way."

She expanded on the importance and opportunity virtual exchanges provide students who are unable to gain international experiences in other ways. She stated: "In my virtual class, I had so many students that had mobility issues, for example. One of my students had a young son, she couldn't travel somewhere, but she could participate in this virtual class. You know, the benefits aren't the same, they're different but they're great. And, they reported back having really enjoyed it and learned a lot." Without the use of virtual exchanges, there would be a decreased opportunity for many students to be able to participate in an international educational experience. Sometimes this goes beyond the control of the students due to financial or personal barriers that are out of the control of the student. Whereas with virtual exchanges, students can connect in a global environment as long as they have access to the internet and a faculty member who is willing to utilize this virtual pedagogy.

Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes

The core values of global learning that are established within the virtual exchanges in Joyce's department have a lasting impact that goes beyond the student's time at the university.

Joyce shared the majority of graduates from her department go on to work for think tanks, the federal government, and nonprofit organizations. Therefore, the department needs to infuse the ideology of global citizenship throughout its curriculum, so students are prepared to work in these diverse multicultural roles. Being able to educate and graduate students with analytical thinking is vital to her students' future skills needed in the workforce. At the same time having an understanding of what a global community is with the appropriate level of sensitivity towards different cultures and traditions are key cogs within the learning outcomes of Joyce's virtual exchange. She stated, "And we see, um, you know, fostering these sorts of global elements in our classes as a part of that educational mission." This educational mission will have an impact that goes well beyond the students' time at the University of Maryland.

She shared that global citizenship learning happened when they tried to establish what the class conversations were going to be in the first meeting regarding the different cultural norms of a partner institution for their virtual exchange. For example, when partnering with an institution in Saudi Arabia, students were told that the partner class would be all male participants, so it was important for the faculty to prepare all students to be able to work in a different kind of setting than they had in the past. This type of experience of working with a male-only audience from Saudi Arabia prepares students for dealing with different international partners with different rules and different cultural norms with cultural sensitivities. As Joyce exclaimed, even though they are virtual in these settings working with these global partners affords the students the opportunity to be educated and expand their knowledge of a diverse world, which is a critical competency for being a global citizen.

Another example illustrates how virtual exchanges were able to facilitate global learning outcomes for their students. This is a course that enables students from UMD to participate in a

virtual exchange with students from an institution in Latin America. They looked at different social justice movements across each other's countries and made comparisons. This comparative perspective allows students to not only understand what's happening in their country and communicate that with students from their own university but also that from students from an international partnership. The students from the international partnership at the same time are also able to share the social justice movements on similar topics such as gender identity and LGBTQIA or ask questions about the Black Lives Matter Movement with their US counterparts. The comparison students engaged in deepened their understanding of different social justice movements throughout the globe, and working with their international partners allowed for a greater understanding and communicative process that otherwise would not be possible due to travel restrictions and lack of mobility from COVID-19.

Support of University Leadership

The university administration played a large role in supporting the faculty in the creation of opportunities for increasing equity in global learning. Joyce underscored the importance of leadership towards the development of equitable spaces within the virtual global exchanges, saying "The leadership in both [my department] and then Education Abroad [work together] to develop these opportunities. We've been in continual collaboration with [Education Abroad and my department] to develop this from the start of the global program. And then the chair has stepped in also, has provided obviously training, but also resources. And resources have been crucial." The support that the university administration provided Joyce has allowed for an expansion of global programming for students to expand their knowledge within global cultural contexts. Moreover, the additional support from the university has also led to the buy-in of

leadership within Joyce's department by providing additional resources to support the global programs.

Increasing Partnership Equity

The partnerships between the faculty and their international teaching counterparts played a large role in their global citizenship development. The relationships in these spaces are not just one-sided but are viewed as a true partnership from the perspective of the American university's virtual exchange teachers and instructors. The faculty utilizes several approaches to address the inequities within their partnerships. Joyce addressed the role of finances speaking about the inequities within her virtual exchanges.

The university's Office of International Affairs provides small grants as a resource for their faculty as an aid to facilitate their virtual exchanges. These small grants have been used to help the UMD faculty pay honorariums towards their international counterparts, translation services, and of course materials. Acknowledging the power dynamic within a virtual exchange between a global north and a global south partnership has been imperative for Joyce when working with her international partners. These grants have been able to help support the imbalance that exists in these virtual global settings. Joyce stated: "That I'm not asking [our international partners] to contribute time for a whole lecture, for the benefit of my students, without giving them an honorarium, right?" This provides the partner the with ability to be compensated for their time. Or as Joyce put it, this expresses our gratitude for their time: "Thank you. We understand that your time is valuable, and we really appreciate your expertise." Small gestures of acknowledgment like this can help to build respect, and equity, and facilitate an equal voice between the partnership.

Michael

Michael is a non-tenure track clinical faculty member at his institution. This position evolved into a full-time position for him, having initially started off as a graduate assistant who worked 10-20 hours/week while he was working on his PhD in Education starting in 2010. Within his role, he works in a Living/Learning Community at the university which includes a service-learning component. This was an area he wanted to explore what a short-term international opportunity could look like for the students, and he partnered with a colleague at an institution in Ecuador.

Motivation for Virtual Exchange

Ongoing relationships that have evolved kept Michael engaged in his drive to continue the works for his virtual exchange. He views it an honor to be able to bring this type of course to his students, as well as the students and colleagues at the partner institution. Michael described this by stating, "In my heart and the people that I work with, they're our close colleagues and friends, so you know, it's a blessing to be able to work with them and their students." His work as a faculty member within an international virtual exchange is out of a true passion that goes beyond just teaching the course. And even though the facilitation of the courses or the challenges with communication barriers have not always gone as planned, he still has the passion for it, as he stated: "I never thought I would get to have this kind of experience. And it was really interesting to participate in. It didn't always work. Sometimes it's frustrating. But I'm happy that I got to do it." Michael finds his purpose and meaning in being able to contribute towards the expansion of knowledge of others.

Equitable Global Learning Spaces for Students

Michael's course is situated in a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program that is a part of a global north-south virtual exchange. He addressed the continued room for growth with the power imbalances that exist in his course. He shared: "That's something that I think I can do a much better job. There's still a ton of power dynamics involved in the course in terms of the weight of instruction and curriculum development. A lot of that stuff is my burden and I wish it could be more of a shared- shared collaboration." He expanded on how he addresses the issues: "One of the ways that I try is we basically do like the way the course is structured is like a series of case studies and then, applied methods to unpack the cases. The case studies are, we have some [United States] cases, we have some [partner country] cases, and then we have some kind of more globally oriented cases." The addressing of the inequities and course power dynamics with multiple global perspectives allows for the students on both sides of the exchange a chance to share their experience meanwhile developing a greater global understanding by learning from others as well.

Michael also discussed the importance of technology when dealing with the power dynamics of the partnership. He shared:

> Going to 100% Zoom made this class 1000 times better. Everyone's on a level playing field, everyone's thoughts are the same. Everyone has the same issues with their microphones and speakers, it's not like you can put the screen the images right there and nobody has to like to peer in on you. So, [Zoom] really made it much more that leveled playing field for the exchange. You put them in breakout rooms, you can be strategic about how you pair them up, either by topic area of interest, or social area of interest, or by universities so that really helped a lot as well.

Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes

Michael's virtual exchange evolved from a feeling of the need to address gaps in global and cultural understandings from an alternative break program. In his previous experience, students who were participating in the international alternative break did not have a cultural understanding or context of the country that they were visiting and were not able to fully understand the work that they were doing during their period of stay in the country. From these previous international experiences, in his virtual exchange course, he wanted to create an international opportunity for students to understand better the cultural context of Ecuadorian culture than they would have been able to previously.

Faculty have tried various ways to create formal spaces for students to increase their communication with one another. However, virtual exchange has also allowed for informal spaces to be created where students can expand their cultural knowledge and practice culturally competent communication which might serve as barriers in other settings. To Michael, expanding conversations to non-course related topics actually allowed the students to open up when sharing the things that they love. Michael provided this as an example: "When you give them a set of like prompts that are not related to the course, then the exchange happens. So you know, there's always like a group of students that's into, uh, [Korean Popular Culture] K-pop or anime, or the same video game, or chess, or dancing, or soccer, and then like, you know, so when you just prompt like, what are you doing this weekend and let them go with it and then you come back to the coursework later." Opportunities for students to bond over shared interests allow them to create common connections and feel more comfortable working with those from different cultural backgrounds when they find that they have shared interests.

While the students from UMD were able to gain a cultural experience with the Ecuadorian students, this was quite one-sided. Michael shared that while the faculty and students from the Ecuadorian university enjoyed having the UMD students visit they really wanted an expansion of the partnership, stating that "it would be nice to have like a more ongoing opportunity for collaboration and also the potential to visit the University of Maryland." This shows that there needs to be increasing equity within the global learning outcomes and that they can't be one-sided.

Increasing Partnership Equity

The power dynamic of working in a global north/global south virtual exchange partnership has challenges such as dramatic financial inequities between UMD and its international partners. Having additional resources at their disposal for internationalization, the faculty at UMD tries to address the challenges of the inequities firsthand. Michael shared how he used the small development grant he received for his virtual exchange. He said, "So, we applied for the grant. And basically, all of the money in the budget, almost all of it, like 90% of it is for students and faculty from [our partner university], to come to the University of Maryland." The financial support that the University of Maryland provides Michael's partner institution helps to address the financial inequities and allows for the partnership to be more equitable for both sides to be successful and facilitate its mission for students from both institutions to work together and increase their global understandings.

Funds from the grant were also utilized for reciprocity, which is to bring Ecuadorian faculty and students to the UMD campus for a short-term study abroad, where previously only UMD students and faculty were able to travel to the partner institution in Ecuador. This also increased the participation of students from the study abroad who could work with the same

students in the global classroom initiative creating a constant feedback loop/participant pipeline. Michael stated, "Students who participate in the study abroad can then work with the same students in the global classroom, or they can participate in the global classroom, and then go and meet those students when they go down to [South America] or the students from [South America] can come up and meet them when they're here." These continuous dual study abroad slash virtual exchange opportunities allow students to be immersed in a multiple-term global experience.

The inequities that exist within the virtual exchange are not just financial nor sociopolitical within global north/global south partnerships. Inequities can also exist due to the language in which the courses are being conducted. One of the ways that address the language equity issue for students from a Spanish-speaking country participating in a course that is being taught in English is to give unique recognition for the student's achievements. Michael stated: "One of the value ads is that all of the student participants at [our partner institution] get a letter of participation. One of those letters indicates, like, I participated in a fully English course at the University of Maryland; I am capable of completing coursework, collaboration, uh, whatever it is, whatever language we kind of use for that year." These letters of recognition are presented on official university letterhead, signed by the faculty of instruction, the university's international affairs administration, and departmental administrators. Past participants of this virtual exchange have utilized these experiences to stand out on graduate applications when applying to institutions in the United States, Europe, or other institutions where English is the primary language of instruction. This letter displays their ability to speak and perform in an English-speaking class setting in a global and intercultural environment.

Rachel

Rachel is a non-tenure track faculty member and a graduate student at UMD. At the time of her interview, she was in her second year at her university. As a part of her graduate assistantship, she teaches courses for a minor that is a part of the Global Classrooms Initiative. Before she arrived at UMD, Rachel was a K-12 math teacher and has worked for seven years in the United States over two different time periods with international teaching opportunities between her two domestic teaching roles. Her teaching in an international setting consists of nine years in Europe and the United Kingdom schools. She had experience teaching face-to-face, hybrid, and virtually before starting in her role at UMD.

Motivation for Virtual Exchange

Past international experience of living abroad for over a decade was instrumental in Rachel's decision to become an instructor in a virtual exchange. Upon returning to the United States before starting her graduate program, she longed to learn new cultures and engage with international populations. When supervisors of her new graduate assistantship recognized her background and skillset of working with multiple cultures, they quickly offered her the opportunity to teach their globally-infused course. She jumped at the opportunity. Rachel shared, "[the supervisors] immediately were like, 'Oh, would you like to do this? Because you seem like you would be good at it.' Yeah, so I was really excited about that opportunity." Being able to call upon the skills gained from teaching internationally and wanting to connect back to an international education setting were the driving factors for Rachel to work in this area. These skills were also recognized by her departmental leadership where she was given the opportunity to teach these courses.

Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes

The intentionality of providing students with experience from working with different cultural contexts was a key factor within Rachel's course for facilitating global learning outcomes. Students from UMD and from the partner institution were broken up into working teams or working groups. One of the primary learning outcomes of this course was for students to be able to participate on an international team to bring different cultural contexts to a specific case study or project in a third country of Rwanda. Rachel shared that for this project students were given the ability to investigate rural villages in Rwanda and come up with solutions on how to improve that environment. She did provide that there were some concerns from herself and the students, that students and faculty from the U.S. might hold cultural biases due to their US perspectives. The UMD participants then tried to address their cultural biases by becoming more aware and acknowledging their privilege within the global system.

In this course, the UMD faculty utilized one syllabus while their counterparts in Hong Kong used a different syllabus for their students. Since the course learning outcomes were slightly different between the two institutions taking place in this virtual exchange, the cultural differences were not fully considered within the context of their international partners in the syllabus the same way the UMD faculty addressed them. Rachel stated that this created an increased dialogue between the UMD students and the faculty during class meetings before they met with their partner institution to work on the project. She stated, "That in itself is a valuable experience for our students to have to navigate what we consider social justice with, what another cultural group considers social justice is and how do you navigate that and how do you kind of successfully weave through these different concerns and different perspectives." The experience of participating in an international virtual exchange provided students with multiple

cultural understandings, learning how individuals or groups from other cultures may view culture differently and have different perspectives than that of their own. It is essential that within virtual exchanges, faculty need to shift their intended global learning outcomes from theoretical to applied. The students saw firsthand how social justice can vary from culture to culture across the globe.

Peace as an Unintended Outcome

While peacebuilding was not a learning outcome outlined on the faculty's syllabi, it was still an unintended outcome of the courses for Rachel's two virtual exchanges. Rachel provided examples from both of her virtual exchange courses. For one of her virtual exchanges, she was able to parallel social justice issues from a local scale and talked with her students about the Black Lives Matter movement within the United States with the protests that were taking place at her partner institution's campus in Southeast Asia. She stated:

> Then I think in terms of the [other course] our students were really interested in the protests and the situation in [our partner institution's country] and they were making some parallels to what was going on in the US [with the protests against the killing of George Floyd]. And I think as we've talked about like there were some, you know, there are some cultural differences about how we engage in what we consider to be social justice work.

While course topics focused on aspects of social justice issues happening in both countries, students were able to participate and hold discussions and conversations by weaving their different perspectives of what was happening in their own country as well as that of the partner institutions with the social unrest. These levels of dialogue that the faculty allowed their students to have aligns closely with Cohn's (1987) approach in which alternative diverse voices can imagine an alternative version of future reality to create justice where it is being sought.

Moreover, there were different perspectives in the class, shared or unshared, and students were open to hearing them. This allowed for multiple perspectives to be in contact with one another and to learn from each other, aligning with Lin et al. (2015). And while peace education was not a focused topic within the syllabus the practices in the learning practice imply a process of creating peace and focusing on peace education.

Grover

Grover is a non-tenure-track faculty member in the humanities field. Originally from Europe, he studied in the UK for his PhD before coming to the United States to work at UMD. Since 2013, he has worked primarily as a researcher at an institution focusing on the infusion of technology within the humanities field. His virtual exchange partners with a university in South America.

Motivation for Virtual Exchange

The ability to participate and develop a virtual exchange led Grover to expand and "reinforce" the connections with their colleagues abroad. They could share their scholarship interests and expand them outside of a primarily European setting through the virtual exchange, with students on both sides of the world participating in a learning space together. Additionally, the opportunity to work within the Global Classroom Initiative allowed Grover to expand his skills as an educator. Working primarily as a researcher, he felt teaching the course allowed his students to access materials and subject matters that are not common in his discipline. Grover has subject matter expertise in his discipline, which primarily focuses on European texts. By partnering with a subject matter expert in a South American university, the course materials expanded to include colonial texts from the Americas. He said, "It's a discipline that is taught on its own a little bit more in Europe than over here. So, I was like, 'Wow, that seems like a gap.'"

While he is not financially compensated and teaches the course for free, he is still motivated to share his knowledge and expand the knowledge of his students. He stated: "I thought that would be a good opportunity for me to share some of my skills and knowledge." By teaching the course, he grows in his teaching skills while his students benefit from being introduced to otherwise inaccessible content. The opportunity to teach the course benefits both parties.

Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes

Grover's virtual exchange intends to help students to achieve the outcome of global learning. One of the critical components he and his co-instructor emphasized is addressing the language barriers that exist within their partnership. With the course taking place in Spanish and English, the faculty encouraged students to present in whatever language is the most comfortable for them. While English has been the driving force and dominant language within the lectures, the faculty made intentional efforts to create a safe space for their Spanish-speaking students. Grover expands on this notion stating: "So the syllabus, well, I mean, at a simplest level, we just made sure to translate everything. Our slides are bilingual, so the syllabus is available in English and Spanish." Additionally, the faculty would record lectures of either themselves or guest speakers and use closed captioning within the videos to provide additional support for the students who had differing primary language skills from that of the speaker giving the lecture.

Moreover, intentional efforts were made when forming student groups, with the UMD students and the students from the partner institution being split evenly across the course. Communication skills, e.g., how students learn to communicate in an international multilingual setting was one of the key emphases in the learning outcomes of this course. Going beyond just working together in groups, one of the first assignments included students creating a document

for their international group with said rules and guidelines on how they would communicate with each other so that they know what is expected of each other from the beginning.

Having a multilingual safe space for students to participate was vital for creating an equitable learning space. Grover explained: "You should feel free to speak the language that is most comfortable to you if you're speaking with your peer, for example. And other people should be accepting of that. But at the same time, don't be an asshole about it. Just try and find that sweet spot where you can be comfortable, but still have useful communication to people." Allowing the students in the virtual exchange to use different languages to communicate also opened the ability for students from UMD who spoke Spanish and students from the partner institution who spoke English the ability to use those languages interchangeably, unlike other courses at their institutions, which they primarily had to speak in the language of instruction. Grover stated: "In terms of collaboration among students, we found that they ended up helping each other because there was always someone who would be more proficient [in a language they chose to use to work together]."

This expansion of the use of the language of learning and instruction within the virtual exchange allows for students to be in a more balanced and equitable learning environment with their peers than in an environment where English is dominant and inequity is imposed on students whose language such as English might not be their native tongue. Additionally, it eliminated the need for translators and increased the students' level of international and global communication with their peers.

Stephanie

Stephanie is a tenure-track faculty at UMD within the STEM field. Like several others of the faculty members interviewed for this study, she was a PhD student at UMD before

transitioning into her full-time role upon her graduation. Unlike the other faculty members in the study, Stephanie had just finished developing her virtual exchange and was in her second week of teaching when the data was collected. Stephanie's virtual exchange partners with a university in South Asia which evolved from a connection she made while working there for her Fulbright project.

Faculty's Motivation for Virtual Exchange

Connections she made from her Fulbright to India have been the driving factor for Stephanie to develop her virtual exchange. While in India, she was able to connect with two faculty members (a husband and wife) who both shared the same area of research interest with Stephanie. This allowed them to co-create several research projects together. One of the projects transpired into a Fulbright in the Fall of 2018 for one of the Indian faculty to come to UMD, almost a sort of reciprocity. It was during that term that Stephanie and her colleague from India decided they wanted to continue their work together in an innovative way via the Global Classrooms Initiative. They were able to write the proposal together from Stephanie's couch. She said, "That's been the most amazing part is, just like that feeling that you know, we sat next to each other and wrote the proposal." The ability to co-create something with a longtime colleague turned friend allows the work to remain fresh and exciting. Stephanie shared: "In addition to class, you know, at least twice a week, we've been doing this, so I just find that to be the most amazing thing that I, like, I talked to her most regularly (laughs)."

Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes

Addressing the language barrier between English and Hindi was one of the primary goals for Stephanie and her international partners when designing their virtual exchange. They did not want to have potential students not enroll in the course due to English language proficiency

being a barrier. Stephanie utilized two graduate assistants who are fluent in Hindi to help prepare and translate course materials for students in India. Stephanie highlighted that one of the positive aspects of being able to use the virtual exchange is that students who might need help could message either of the course instructors for assistance such as translating the group projects. This genuinely allowed the students to engage and interact with each other; and also with faculty and graduate assistance at both institutions, their partnership is strengthened with this kind of support.

While course content focused on feminism, patriarchy, and power, it was also not lost on the faculty the importance of addressing the history of colonization and any impact that it has today; as such, they try to decolonize topics surrounding their course. Some of their course topics include destigmatizing issues and taboos surrounding menstruation. Students are encouraged to share perspectives from their own cultures with their colleagues from the other side of the world. Stephanie shared: "I just told the students not to worry about it, that the class is really about participation and about the cultural exchange and learning from each other. And as long as you participate, you'll do well in the class, but that's really the goal." In addition to students understanding women's rights and women's health rights from this course, students indeed share, participate, and learn from each other. This is achieved by the intentional design of learning outcomes by the faculty who designed this course.

Peace as an Unintended Outcome

Violence against women was one of the primary topics in Stephanie's virtual exchange course. Ending violence towards women is a lifelong passion and work that Stephanie and her international partners have striven to do, and they aimed to teach their students the importance of this task in the course environment. Stephanie shared how her collaborator's husband worked

with Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women in her course and contributed to her students' knowledge of gender violence in her partner's country. Violence and stigma towards women and menstruation are not just topics that are relevant to the partner institution in South Asia but also applicable within the United States. She stated: "And so being able to match that, there are conversations that we need to have about people from all over the world who are experiencing the challenges related to and stigma related to menstruation. But then we get to actually have conversations with people from, uh, another location where they're experiencing some of the same things." While course topics address areas related to peace, peacebuilding, or peace education, as they were not the primary concern of the faculty in this specific course, the conditions for peacebuilding through intercultural dialogue (Noddings, 2018), being able to address varying forms of violence (Harris, 20024), and promoting a moral awareness (Noddings, 2018) and commitment to end violence, peace education is de facto evident in this virtual exchange.

Students' Experiences with Virtual Exchange

In this section, I will provide a background of each of the five student interviewees (Arica, Uzair, Danielle, Adam, and Valeria) as student subcases of this study. It is important to note that Arica and Uzair were in the same virtual exchange with PolyU as their partner institution. Danielle, Adam, and Valeria were also in the same virtual exchange as one another, which partnered with a university in Baghdad, Iraq. Within each of the subcases, I will examine their experiences involving virtual exchanges. I will also provide data in this section from 13 students' autoethnographies that were analyzed from course documents as a part of the same virtual exchange that Arica and Uzair were enrolled in.

Arica

Arica is a senior who is originally from New York. She is working on a bachelor's degree in criminology with a minor in leadership studies. Her international experience prior to the start of her virtual exchange course consisted of vacations to Mexico, Greece, and Croatia, as well as visiting her extended family in Puerto Rico. There were several motivating factors that led to her interest in pursuing a course that was a part of the Global Classroom Initiative. One was that it fulfilled a part of her leadership minor requirements as one of its elective options. The other was that she was able to interact to gain an understanding of students from different cultures and backgrounds. She said: "I realized that it was really cool learning about different cultures, learning together, trying to work together, and experiencing different things. And after learning about that I was like, that's actually really cool, I've never even considered talking to people outside of the United States, because that's all we do is talk to people inside of the country."

Establishing a Culture of Understanding

Prior to enrolling in her virtual exchange, Arica did not have much knowledge about the cultural background of the country nor the area where the students of her virtual exchange partner institution were located. She shared that learning from her classmates located in Asia sparked her interest in expanding her global knowledge. Arica stated: "After talking to them about one meeting, we talked about general things, and I was like, wow, I want to know what they think on certain issues." Being able to get feedback on global issues that were directly impacting her classmates allowed her to gain a greater understanding of people and issues outside the US and make connections. She was not only able to directly link the issues impacting her fellow students but was also able to ask about their perspectives on how the issues impacted them.

Global Citizenship Comprehension

Arica shared that she has experienced international travel and culture in the past, but she mainly viewed herself through a domestic lens. However, the virtual exchange experience allowed her to expand her identity in terms of how she viewed herself within the global society. She shared, "I would probably say that this was the first time I viewed myself in the lens of a global community, just because you don't really experience, well I didn't really experience that at Maryland, I usually stuck to the people that felt familiar to me, had things in common with me, all of that." Her experience of participating in a virtual exchange allowed her to expand on her identity and she now feels a part of a community much larger than the one she was brought up in.

Conduit towards Peace Building

Arica was able to recognize that peacebuilding could be achieved through her virtual exchange as they allowed students and people from different cultures to come together and work on world problems that were bigger than those of their own societies. She shared:

> I feel like we should use everything that we can, and we're all working on the same fight, we're all trying to get rid of hatred and global warming, and everything that's bad with the planet, we all want it to be a safer, happier environment, and the fact that we're still working against each other is unbelievable when it's so easy to be able to actually work together.

This level of awareness allowed her to go beyond the scope of her own environment and take the skills learned in her virtual exchange beyond her time in the classroom. The viewpoints she shares demonstrate that she cares about the world and people and aspires for peaceful collaboration with people of different cultures.

Uzair

Uzair is a first-generation American student from Maryland whose family immigrated from Pakistan. He is currently finishing up a bachelor's degree in biology and hopes to attend medical school after he graduates. Uzair was introduced to his virtual exchange by his friend. He was interested in learning about global leadership and how leadership takes different forms in different countries.

Global Citizenship Comprehension

Being able to participate in a virtual exchange helped Uzair grow an understanding of his global identity through working on a multinational team. Several parts of the structure of the course that assisted Uzair's understanding of his global citizen identity and facilitated his global citizenship development include student groups and communication. Students were divided into working groups of two to three students from UMD and three to five students from their partner institution. Uzair remarked that students working in multinational groups expand their knowledge of how individuals with different cultural backgrounds and countries of origin would address topics differently. He shared: " Working along with students from a different area in the world helped as well because creating teamwork, and working together, and then from there on you would separate into groups. And then from there, there would be some days there would be more topics to do." The multinational teams also aided in cross-cultural communication. He shared:

> “So when working in the group, obviously we had to communicate with each other, so it helped me build on my social skills and communication skills. When there was teamwork, at times it was required to…And then that really was communicating with each other, like, 'No, this would be a better solution.' So that was actually very helpful.”

He also expanded that he now had a greater understanding and appreciation of different viewpoints, being able to work with those with different ideas and incorporate those ideas into the project so that everyone has an equal voice. He provided an example:

> “Working on a global team, was actually quite interesting, because usually, all the teamwork I've participated in is with people around me, in my class, or in my vicinity. So the first time that I actually worked with somebody across the world, it was very interesting to see ideas they brought to the table and the ideas we brought to the table, and how we went on about solving and working together.”

Uzair noted the UMD and students from his international partner institution became considerate of each other: "We created a WhatsApp group because not everyone had an iPhone. So through WhatsApp, we would communicate and chat. And then we would wish... I remember me and [UMD classmate] wishing happy [Chinese] New Year in the chat as well." The experience of the virtual exchange allowed Uzair to grow his own cultural understanding and then apply it to his classmates in Asia. Through shared communication and allowing everyone to have an equal voice within their group structure, Uzair felt he had grown as a global citizen. And while the equal structure and voice of the course allowed Uzair to expand his own global citizenship awareness, by learning to care for each other, it also serves as a way to build peace within the virtual exchange.

Conduit towards Peace Building

Virtual exchanges may serve as a conduit for building peace amongst their participants. One of the ways a virtual exchange course can promote peacebuilding is through students getting to know one another and understanding their different backgrounds and perspectives (Lin et al., 2015). To accomplish this, within Uzair's student group, they played icebreakers and started

asking each other questions about their different cultural backgrounds, where they were from, and where they live now. He stated: "We specifically chose these topics so that we would better know each other and make each other comfortable with the opening [up]." Moreover, they would ask questions about shared similarities amongst themselves such as ages, what they are studying, and what they would like to do once they finish their studies. Their intentionality of placing everyone on equal footing from the start, allowed for the participants on both sides of the virtual exchange to have a common ground going into them working together on a group assignment. Uzair was keenly aware of the importance of how this allowed the students to learn peacebuilding within their course. He stated,

> By understanding each other's backgrounds, we made relations, such as sharing the same major, or having the same background such as how [Adeem] from [our partner institution] and I did. This opened up the gates for friendship and started a sort of peace in the group. A peace which understood the cultural differences yet allowed each other to be open and friendly. This was the main reason why our group had the most contact which each other when compared to the rest and that is why we excelled in all of the assignments and aced all of the teamwork.

Summing up, he shared: "In order to build peace, one must first build a friendship and relationship with everyone."

Danielle

Danielle is a graduate student who is pursuing a master's degree in architecture. Originally from Michigan, she worked as a high school educator before deciding to return to school as a part of a mid-career change. As a part of their topical design studio requirements, the master students in her program were given two choices: one was a course with a domestic focus,

and the other was a virtual exchange with an instructor in Iraq so that they learn to take a global perspective to their studio's topic for that term. Danielle expressed that she was open to both options and was placed into the virtual exchange. She shared that originally, she did not have the motivation to participate in a virtual exchange. She took it as a part of the requirement.

Global Citizenship Comprehension

Danielle sighed before explaining her frustration with the lack of interactions with her colleagues in Iraq. The course structure for her virtual exchange consisted of four joint classes and a Facebook group connecting the UMD students with the institution in Baghdad. The majority of the positive connections she had were with the teacher's assistant for the course, who was a professional architect with Iraqi heritage and served as the translator for the course. From the course lectures presented by the faculty located in Baghdad, Danielle was able to expand her knowledge of the culture, history, and political scape of Iraq. This aided her with her design project for the course. She stated, "I don't know that I would have independently learned about [the culture, history, politics, and the importance of religion of the city] without the course. I do think that hearing some of the perspectives from the professors, from the school, the university in Baghdad, and some of the feedback from the students, that was interesting, the things that they felt were important."

Adam

Adam, who is originally from New Jersey, is a graduate student working on a dual master's program in historical preservation and architecture. His virtual exchange experience consisted of an architecture studio course that partnered with an institution in Baghdad, Iraq. During his undergraduate, Adam expressed how he wasn't provided many opportunities to have global perspectives within his education's curriculum offerings. The one course he took prior to

his virtual exchange with a global perspective was a music theory course. Unlike Danielle, who was placed in the same studio, the virtual exchange was his first choice. He stated, "[this global classroom] was an opportunity to finally kind of, instead of just talking the talk, actually walking the walk and an attempt to engulf yourself in someone else's culture and learn from them and learn a different perspective."

Global Citizenship Comprehension

The virtual exchange allowed Adam to gain a greater understanding of the culture and geographical landscape when it came to his urban design project. He smirked and laughed before he began to explain that he would typically use Google Maps and Google Arrows to dive into the greater landscape of an unknown city with hopes of being able to understand how to design his structure(s). With the virtual exchange, Adam was able to communicate with his colleagues in Iraq and ask direct questions which enhanced his design and allowed him to have a greater understanding of cultural competence which allowed him to design for a population he otherwise would just be using his Western context as a reference. He said:

> But when there's so little information about a place, especially digitally archived such as Baghdad, you're coming across things unintentionally, and really trying to piece it together from different user photographs… So [the virtual exchange] definitely forced me to kind of getting more of an idea of what the user' experience is. But having said that, there still wasn't really a good indication of kind of the day-to-day routine. You might not necessarily take the level to explore and dissect all the pieces of information that you would within like this virtual space that you don't have the same access to.

The virtual exchange allowed Adam to explore and experience an awakening of his own identity within a global context and professional environment when it came to placing cultural

norms of his culture and placing them into an international design environment. Prior to this experience, Adam did not realize that the Iraqi students had access to the same design software and technologies as the UMD students. He said, " We [UMD students] have these tools for presentations and [I thought] they [the Iraqi students] didn't have the same computers and software programs as we had, even though they do." Adam's experience challenged his preconceived notions about his Iraqi colleagues' access to technology and technical skills. He addressed his own cultural biases from working with the Iraqi students.

Virtual exchanges provide a channel for students to grow their global awareness and sense of global citizenship. Following his first international educational experience of being a student in a virtual exchange, Adam expanded on this notion of global citizenship development for all students. He said,

> I think [virtual exchanges are] necessary. I think it’s a good idea. I mean, I come from a perspective where I seek [cultural experiences]. So, I think it could be, I think it would be very useful as to almost a core requirement. Um, especially in United States… And if you think about undergrads, they haven’t traveled, they haven’t had that opportunity yet, or that access to travel. So, their perspective is this 10-mile radius around campus, essentially. And I think this is [an] accessible way to start that, um, that outreach and that exploration.

Moreover, he shared that virtual exchange has the ability to make internationalization more inclusive and accessible than study abroad programs. He said, "I think if you can fit more of those in, I think it's more beneficial." The expansion of inclusion within virtual exchanges allows for more students to develop much-needed global cultural competencies and skills needed to cooperate and be successful citizens within a global society. The development of these skills

was even more scarce during COVID-19 when students did not have access to study abroad and international travel, leaving virtual exchanges as the only form of internationalization on college campuses around the globe.

Conduit Towards Peace Building

Adam's virtual exchange is a global north/global south collaborative course with a partner institution located in Baghdad, Iraq. Prior to his virtual exchange his only experience with Iraq, as he phrased it, was "a very narrow perspective through the lens of what Iraq and especially Baghdad [is/was] through the media." Sharing his initial thoughts on the course, he stated that he thought he "could save the world through this building [we are designing] where I think aspects that we [as Americans] definitely take for granted in terms of safety and our urban designs in U.S. cities."

However, he learned that in Iraq there is a different concern for safety, which is that safety against gender violence is critically important. He learned from the experiences of his female classmates located in Baghdad. Adam shared: "It's a lot more violence targeted at women. The class was a majority female, identified as female. So that was definitely a focus also on their safety." Hence, he made sure his design emphasized safety for women. Another aspect he was learning to consider was designing in a city that had been part of a war zone. Safety was a key aspect of the building. He shared: "And a lot of [my Iraqi colleagues] were parents, so the concerns they have as parents raising children in the city, that's still rebuilding, but that's still so fragile." The opportunities to learn from his colleagues in Iraq broadened Adam's perspective in designing in an urban environment that suffered from geopolitical and gender violence that is different from his own environment. The virtual exchange experience Adam has, working with

an international partner who was located in a country that had previously been at war with the United States, Adam's country, encourages him to consider.

Valeria

Valeria is a graduate student studying architecture and community planning with hopes of completing her studies with dual master's degrees. She was born in Colombia and immigrated to the United States when she was 12 years old. She has lived entirely in Maryland since her family relocated to the United States. Valeria's primary interest in participating in a virtual exchange stems from the opportunity to learn from and interact with students about a place she hadn't learned about before. She was given this opportunity by participating in a virtual exchange as a part of her topical design studio which partnered with students from an Iraqi university.

Challenges

Valeria expressed several challenges that she faced while being a participant with her virtual exchange partners who were from a university in Iraq. Beyond the seven-hour time difference that exists between the two institutions, she felt that communication was one of the major barriers for her joint, international architecture topical design studio. She stated: "We were all like, determined to overcome the barriers of the time difference, the language, even though none of us spoke their language, we did try to communicate in a different way." She did acknowledge that many of the Iraqi students were able to speak English while none of the students on the American side spoke Arabic.

One of the ways that she and her colleagues were able to communicate was by utilizing different communication styles and finding the common language that students from both institutions possessed. She explained they were able to communicate "with drawings, and they did the same as well. So, I think it was balanced in that way." The common ground of being able

to speak with drawings allowed for a more even plane for the students on both sides of the exchange.

Global Citizenship Comprehension

Valeria provided the structure and format of her virtual exchange, the same virtual exchange that Adam and Danielle were enrolled in. The students from Baghdad focused on a project based in the United States, while the students at UMD were tasked with a site in Iraq. While initially researching their international sites, the students could then pose questions relating to the geography, culture, and geopolitical structure of each of the national cities in which the students were located. Valeria expressed: "The [virtual exchange] gave us a new sensitivity for the unknown, which is really important when working at a global level. And, um, just kind of understanding that we don't know everything, and that everything we find might not be precisely accurate." The virtual interactions provided Valeria with a global lens when it came to designing her project.

Through this experience of connecting with her Iraqi colleagues virtually, she humbled herself, changing her view of designing for different cultures. She said: "So, being open to listening and to see what's there and to, um, you know, be able to interact with people from a place you've never known before. I think it, it definitely, sparks a curiosity to keep learning more and to keep interacting more worldwide." The virtual exchange provided a channel for Valeria to explore global citizenship concerning her work. From this experience, her curiosity has been sparked to keep learning and being a part of a global system that is larger than she previously knew.

Conduit towards Peace Building

Valeria's experience of participating in a virtual exchange that partnered with an institution with which the United States had previously been at war increased her awareness of the students from the class. After being able to work with her Iraqi colleagues, she expressed the importance of these interactions. She stated:

> [the Iraqis] don't want [war] to become their identity and to limit the things that they have access to; we need to be keeping that in mind like it did come up, it came up more in the research that we did. And I think what came up more, it's the people's determination to keep going, to dream big, to make their city the best they can be, to move past the war and the turmoil.

She was also quick to express how the interactions with individuals whose country and her country had previously been at war with have shaped her new point of view when it came to designing a new structure and space within their urban environment of Baghdad.

The tone in her voice changed from very passionate to more sensitive when she stated: "And, you know, [we intend to] make use of these places for healing, for any of the activities that they wanna use them for. So, I think it came up in that way, not so directly. I think we were kind of like exploring the field with care." The sense and level of care in the newfound understanding of the Iraqi people allowed Valeria to completely reshape the design of her structure to take that as a place of healing, culture, and care.

Document Analysis of Student Experiences from a Virtual Exchange Course

In this section, I will describe how thirteen students at UMD who participated in a virtual exchange course reflected upon their experiences related to global citizenship development, global leadership, and peace education. The data directly comes from a mini-autoethnography

assignment. In this assignment, students were instructed to reflect on one or more of the three aforementioned topics. Of the thirteen autoethnographies, five focused solely on global citizenship, two focused on global leadership, two on peace education, one chose to incorporate global leadership as well as peace education, one focused on global citizenship and global leadership, and two decided to utilize all three topics in their assignment. The student names were removed from the autoethnographies, and I numbered each of the documents 1-13 during the analysis. Therefore, in this section, the autoethnographies will be labeled as AE1-AE13 to represent each document.

Global Citizenship Comprehension

One of the most prominent findings to be generated from the autoethnographies was the students' ability to understand, explain, and self-identify their development of global citizenship throughout the virtual exchange. AE1 displayed her knowledge of global citizenship with the production of original work in the form of a poem entitled "Global Citizenship in My Words." She goes on to reflect on previously lived experiences. She highlights how their experience in the virtual exchange course has taught them to be more peaceful and sustainable and want to contribute to the building of a more just society. This was an area she stated they did not experience in any of their other courses. The openness of global understanding is vital in developing competent global citizens. AE2 addressed this by providing a reference to an article from the course. The student highlighted from the article (Lee, 2006) that traditional college-aged Americans (ages 18-24) are less globally aware of international issues than their peers from abroad. This level of ignorance of international issues is one of the critical reasons virtual exchanges play such an impactful role in developing globally culturally competent students, mainly when access to international education has been limited by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Open and equitable communication played a crucial role in creating a space for students to come together and help develop their global citizenship skills, no matter their previous knowledge of the culture they are partnered with. AE3 shared***:*** "Creating spaces together where everyone feels welcomed was vital in this class and showed how global citizenship could be introduced and permeated in our lives. Having a project to do and figuring out ways of communication forced us to build such a space. Therefore, values that are upheld by global citizenship were needed to sustain such an environment." Failure to create equitable environments to open lines of communication can hurt the students' global citizenship development. AE2 shared their view on people affected by conflicts: "If [we] can't understand the people affected, then how are they supposed to empathize with the people affected? This can lead to unnecessary forms of conflict when it could have been all avoided if everyone took the time to learn about global issues." Open lines of communication and cultural understanding are vital when trying to avoid global conflict while at the same time growing and promoting global understanding. AE4 highlighted the importance of open communication by saying:

> “Throughout this course, I was shocked to find out how much we had in common. Before starting this course, I was nervous that communicating with them would be awkward due to our cultural differences. Luckily, we were able to share a lot of laughs, and I had a fun time working with them. Our group was made up of two students from the University of Maryland and two students from our partner institution. To my surprise, I looked forward to this class each week. Especially when we got to meet with them and work together. It was not surprising it was awkward at first, but once we got to know each other more and completed more activities together, our relationship grew stronger.”

This level of open communication allowed for mutual growth amongst the participants of the virtual exchange, finding more commonalities rather than differences and addressing previously conceived notions about those from other cultures. AE6 shared that the student's ability to participate in an international virtual exchange provides them with international exposure and opportunities while not being a student in a homogamous mindset, which can cause xenophobic rhetoric. They stated that without being exposed to students not living within the United States, it is hard to develop those skills that are necessary for the successful development of competencies for global leadership and global citizenship. Working with students that have different cultures, values, and beliefs allows for the development of mutual understanding that is also vital in cross-communication."

In addition to cultural communication, a growth mindset is needed within global citizenship development across aspects of education. AE13 defined this in their own words, stating: "The key to global citizenship is to enlighten people across the world to be more open to learning about other cultures. They must be willing to learn to close the gap of feeling as though they are different from other cultures. Transnational, virtual courses will provide us with this education." Indirectly, several students shared that virtual exchanges assisted them in other aspects of their collegiate experiences. AE9 stated: "[This virtual exchange] allowed me to prepare better for other classes and allow me to further my career in education."

Virtual exchanges allow students taking this course to be paired together, working through cultural differences to accomplish the greater goal of a joint international project. AE13 stated, "Having these classes gives students the experience of working with someone whose mindset and experiences might be entirely different and helps them foster a mutual understanding of cultures through working together. The major benefit of these courses is the

relative accessibility [for students who could not travel abroad in person]." Moreover, virtual exchanges address the digital divide, increasing access to global citizenship development that would not otherwise be possible due to the pandemic and other political factors. Several students addressed this within their auto ethnographies and shared the importance of how virtual exchanges can reduce this digital virtual global divide in educating global citizens.

Conduit towards Peace Building

Students in the virtual exchange were also able to identify parallel social injustice that was taking place in their own country as well as that within the country of their partner institution. Linking the current events covered in the virtual exchange allowed the students to learn about global issues occurring in the "real world" and work as a global team to come up with realistic and viable solutions. AE2 shared,

> “Through the virtual class I was able to meet with people from Hong Kong Polytechnical University and I was able to learn more about the recent Hong Kong protest and how it is affecting them as citizens and students. This will help us in peace building because we are able to learn about the causes and reasons for the Hong Kong Protest and discuss ways to end the conflict. We are able to discuss and work towards a direction of peace together. People can also take what they learn from the discussion and apply it to their own country. The end goal of everyone is peace and we can learn so much from each other as we work towards peace.”

Through the experiences of this virtual exchange, students recognize in their autoethnographies the potential virtual exchanges have in addressing conflict regarding national identity. Students shared that being a part of a virtual exchange challenged the way that they viewed themselves within the world. Being able to work with those in other parts of the world has expanded the

students' mindset and helped them gain cultural understanding beyond that of their own. AE13 expanded on the potential of virtual exchanges stating:

> “Virtual classes allows us to give future generations connections to the world. Ideas of nationalism will disappear and instead be replaced by a world in which we work together to ensure that everyone is given the same rights as everyone else. Ideas of nationalism defined our past, but this past year has taught me that we, as the next generation makes sure it doesn’t define the future.”

The virtual connections brought students together, challenged preconceived notions of other cultures, and found more commonalities than differences. Virtual exchanges are a resource for informing students of global inequities and building peace. AE3 stated:

> These are people that may never ever meet in person but are able to virtually. When you grow up in the same environment and interact with the same people, you see things the same way. But when you interact with someone who grew up differently from yourself and you take the time to learn from them you can understand how they view life, and it helps broaden your understanding because you are able to bounce different viewpoints off of each other.

It is a space where students "compare and contrast" (AE9) have differing views. While AE12 shared, this controlled environment allows students to share different viewpoints across the globe while expanding their cultural understanding of those different from one another.

Summarizing Administrators, Faculty, and Students’ Experiences within Virtual Exchanges at UMD

The findings across the university administrators, faculty, and students differed but were intertwined. The university administrators' experiences generated themes of 'Addressing Access

and Equity' (Boyd, Sasha, and Mary), 'Facilitators for Global Understanding' (Boyd, Martha, Sasha, and Mary), 'Innovation Serving as a Shift in Priorities' (Boyd and Mary), and 'Peace Education' (Boyd and Sasha). The university faculties' experiences generated themes of 'Motivation' (Joyce, Michael, Rachel, Grover, and Stephanie), 'Support of University Leadership'(Joyce) 'Increasing Partnership Equity' (Joyce, and Michael), 'Equitable Global Learning Spaces for Students' (Joyce and Michael), 'Facilitating Global Learning Outcomes' (Joyce, Michael, Rachel, Grover, and Stephanie), and 'Peace as an Unintended Outcome' (Rachel and Stephanie). From the students' experiences, themes generated include 'Establishing a culture of Understanding' (Arica), 'Global Citizenship Comprehension' (Arica, Uzair, Danielle, Adam, Valeria, and autoethnographies), 'Challenges' (Valeria), and 'Conduit towards Peace Building' (Arica, Uzair, Adam, Valeria, and autoethnographies). Overall, the efforts at the administrators' level, faculty's level, and students' level all point to virtual exchange holding promise for facilitating global cultural competence and global citizenship.

For themes related to the development of peace education, the university administrators were aware that virtual exchanges could be a space for peace education to occur depending on how the faculty structured the course. However, the data suggests that the faculty members were not directly attempting to focus on peacebuilding or peace education as learning outcomes for their course(s). Students, on the other hand, were able to identify traits of peacebuilding and indicated their awareness of virtual exchanges being an avenue for peacebuilding even if they were not an intended learning outcome.

Chapter 5

Discussion Research Findings, Implications, and Pathways Forward

This study examined the impact virtual exchanges at an institution of higher education had in promoting global citizenship development and peace education. It explored the experiences of the university's administrators who are involved in overseeing virtual exchanges, the faculty and instructors who facilitated virtual exchange experiences, and the experiences of the students who enrolled and participated in virtual exchanges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Findings

Administrators: Curators of Virtual Global Citizenship Development

The university administrators provided an overview of how they served as facilitators for the institution’s students to develop global competence. Their roles permeated throughout the entire institution from assisting in curriculum development and design to making international partnership alignment possible, to providing holistic international learning, and finally to enabling global citizenship development for the virtual exchange participants, i.e. the students, and the faculty.

The administrators' perspectives help lay the groundwork for partnerships to be formed and expanded so that virtual exchanges make made possible for students to have international and global experiences that would otherwise be impossible. With a focus on project-based global learning outcomes, which is a requirement for virtual exchanges at the university, students are addressing both global and local social issues that they otherwise would not have engaged in within regular classrooms. Additionally, the students are learning from and working with international partners from a society that they would otherwise not have been able to engage with. Boyd elaborated on how virtual exchanges were able to flip internalization on its head, by

providing faculty members a way to infuse an innovative model in any discipline. The innovative teaching model of virtual exchange allows for a whole new level for students to engage in global learning, expand their awareness of global issues and cultivate global understanding which are the aims of global citizenship development. Moreover, virtual exchange provides faculty with the opportunity to engage in their global citizenship development, having to think through a global lens while setting, creating, and teaching toward their course's learning objectives.

The administrators of the university provided their perspectives on how virtual exchanges can act as facilitators for global learning, the growth of global cultural competencies, and global citizenship development for those involved in them. While the administrators do not directly interact with the students by teaching the courses, they do serve as facilitators within the virtual exchanges. The administrators are seen as the curators of the virtual exchanges which are executed by the faculty. The administrators are responsible for choosing which faculty members receive development grant funds to be able to launch the virtual exchanges. While the faculty members are directly responsible for the course contents, the administrators are responsible for relationships with the other institutions (Martha). Moreover, the administrators have developed the pedagogical model for Global Classrooms, requiring all of the signature virtual exchanges to be project-based. They open the space for virtual exchange which allows students to take part in an equitable global learning environment. This has become even more apparent as there was a shift in accessing global education during the height of COVID-19.

It is important to note that while the accessibility towards global learning has expanded for a wider array of students compared to studying abroad, there are levels of unintended outcomes when it comes to the equity of virtual exchanges. Namely, there is an "underlying hierarchy" that Sasha addresses indicates that inequities do exist due to the inequity in resources

thus faculty from UMD are coming from a privileged perspective and place of power based on their country and can possess more resources than their global partners.

Faculty: Facilitators of Global Citizenship Development

Faculty within the virtual exchanges serve as change agents when it comes to facilitating global learning outcomes toward global citizen development. They call upon past relationships with colleagues to create these global virtual learning environments. Michael, Grover, and Stephanie were all able to leverage existing relationships with colleagues abroad in partnering with their virtual exchanges. These past relationships aided in their ability to be aware of and address the social, geopolitical, technological, and economic gaps that existed between their institutions. The fact faculty utilize their past international experience network to facilitate virtual exchange aligns with Weaver et al.' (2022) research findings. That is, faculty's previous international experiences motivate their willingness to facilitate a virtual exchange. The global competencies that the faculty possess have a direct connection to their motivation for teaching their virtual exchanges. This was seen with each of the faculty members interviewed, namely, Grover, Joyce, Rachel, Michael, and Stephanie.

In collaboration with their international colleagues, the faculty was intentional in creating equitable learning environments which was built into the design of the virtual exchanges and manifested in the teaching of the courses. The faculty paid close attention to the language barriers that existed between the students. Grover allowed students to translate with one another or speak in whatever language they were most comfortable in. Another strategy that was implemented by the faculty was multilingual captioning for prerecorded videos as well as bilingual service for the courses. Equity for the classes spread beyond just that of language to overcome communication barriers. Michael and Joyce both describe how rather than using the

grants for their benefit internally at UMD, they utilized their institutional grants to address inequities with their international colleagues. The genuine gesture of giving financial reciprocity to the partners allows for the virtual exchange to happen. Without this intentionality, the students would not be able to develop the global citizenship skills needed to operate in a global society. The ongoing support from the university's administrators is key to the faculty members being able to offer these unique global experiences to their students.

While faculty attempted to address cultural and social inequities in their virtual exchanges, Rachel also struggled with the differences in cultural sensitivity between her students at UMD and the cultural awareness gap between her partner institution's faculty and students.

Students Adaptors of Global Citizenship Development

The student participants of the virtual exchanges were able to display their knowledge and competencies of their global citizenship development. The applied knowledge of global citizenship was seen in all the student cases within the study. Students were able to recognize their global citizenship development from their participation in the virtual exchanges.

In addition to being able to recognize their growth of cultural competencies, they show that virtual exchanges can be used as a source for future students to expand their knowledge. From the experiences the student participants described of their virtual exchanges it is clear that virtual exchange can be an educational tool to promote global citizenship development, which is a major finding from this study. It departs from data from previous studies that examined student competencies in virtual exchanges, such as Ala-Kortesma and Munoz (2023) who utilized post-assessments to measure the students' competencies. Students shared their perceptions of virtual exchanges which granted more students greater access to international experiences, that the knowledge they learned can be applied to courses and subject matters across the university.

Greater access to global education increases equity when it comes to who can participate in international education.

The students' experiences indicate that global citizenship competencies are cultivated through the student participants participating in discussions of social justice issues, overcoming language barriers together, and working on diverse teams to create positive change in the world. While a global pandemic posed dire challenges for students to access international education which was traditionally through study abroad, students still found a way through virtual exchanges to learn from students abroad, working on international teams on projects with challenging topics that gave them a global perspective. Moreover, the virtual exchanges allowed the students to gain global skills that they can apply in their future careers once they graduate with their degrees. Career skills within virtual exchange for their participants were also seen in Golubeva et al. (2022), Inada (2022), Krengel (2021), Liu et al., (2021), and Nyunat et al. (2023) studies. Valeria and Adam Both provided examples of how their experiences within the virtual exchange better prepared them to be more globally and culturally competent when designing buildings in a non-homogeneous environment.

A limitation of the interview data was that I was not able to evaluate their level of applied global competence. However, the autoethnographies were evaluated for an understanding of the students' level of applied level of global competence. This was possible by having access to student projects from a virtual exchange course.

Theorization

The model for cultivating global citizenship must be a holistic approach for the entire school environment (Oxfam, 2015). Within this case study we have seen evidence of the elements suggested in Oxfam's model, for example, the buy-in and commitment from the

university administration, and specific department heads, are crucial in providing support for faculty to create and design their courses providing comprehensive, innovative global learning environments for the student participants.

Oxfam

While Oxfam's global citizenship framework does address the need for exploring local-global connections and engaging in the exploration of complex issues with multiple perspectives, there is one key expansion of this framework that the data from this research suggests. The participants of the study suggest that cultivating global citizenship requires an international experience with someone from another country. This is in alignment with O'Dowd (2018) who defined virtual exchanges as extended online engagements of students in collaboration with partners from other geographical locations or cultural contexts as a part of their education experiences with educators facilitating the experience. The inclusion of the role international partners had in global citizenship development within this space allowed for the participants to explore global issues, gain local-global perspectives, and address complex issues. The study also adds to Oxfam's framework by indicating that the participants were able to gain the information through the lived experiences of working with their international counterparts on group projects via cultural connections, rather than gaining information on global issues, or perspectives through lectures or readings mainly.

Additionally, this study challenges the existing Oxfam framework to broaden its modalities of global citizenship development. They need to consider virtual exchange and online learning as a modality for global citizenship development, while at the same time address the role of other modalities such as the employment of collaborative research when developing their students as global citizens.

With inequity in the global north/global south dynamic, the research findings suggest that virtual exchange needs to address the need for more equitable learning spaces. This became apparent with both the administrators and faculty members finding ways needed to be explored and different methods needed to be applied to address this global issue within their virtual exchanges.

Looking at the entire case from an institutional stance, the university met seven of the ten components of Oxfam's (2015) Global Citizenship Components (illustrated in Table 5):

- "Asking questions and critical thinking at all three levels of the university." The faculty facilitates the space for their students to critically think about global citizenship.
- "Exploring local-global connections and our personal views, values, and assumptions." Engaging with multinational perspectives allowed for multiple points of views, values, and beliefs to be shared and explored within the virtual exchanges.
- "Exploring the complexity of global issues and engaging in multiple perspectives." Each of the virtual exchanges requires the students to focus on complex issues within their disciplines, comparing multiple global perspectives outside, solely their own points of view.
- "Applying learning to real-world issues and contexts." Each of the virtual exchanges took real world issues and had their students work on a solution to the issue at hand.
- "Opportunities for learners to take informed, reflective action and have their voices heard." Open forums existed for the students to work together through project-based learning and were give space to share openly about their thoughts and feelings around the global topics and issues of the courses.

- “All ages” The virtual exchanges at UMD are offered throughout all levels of undergraduate and there are several graduate level courses.
- And 7) “The whole school environment.”

While global classrooms could be applied within the entire school environment, they are specifically classroom based. UMD, partially met one of components, which related to “exploring issues of social justice on local and global scales.” Several of the virtual exchanges (Rachel and Stephanie) explored social justice issues on local and global scales, whereas the others did not address social justice. And the university failed to meet two of the components, of access across all areas of the curriculum and enrichment of everyday learning. For those areas to be successful the institution would need to constitute a mandatory requirement across all disciplines and colleges throughout the university. One area this could be addressed would be incorporating virtual exchanges into every major as a requirement and into general education courses as Adam recommended during his interview. Moreover, since the virtual exchanges took place only one or two times a week, it would not meet the requirements of enriching everyday learning. A way an institution could remedy this would be by making the aforementioned requirements across the curriculum of the institution and even more so by infusing global learning in every one of the courses required for all students.

Table 5. UMD’s Application of Oxfam’s Global Citizenship Components

Oxfam’s Global Citizenship Involves…	*Does UMD’s Global Classroom Initiative Meet?*
Asking questions and critical thinking	Yes
Exploring local-global connections and our personal views, values, and assumptions	Yes

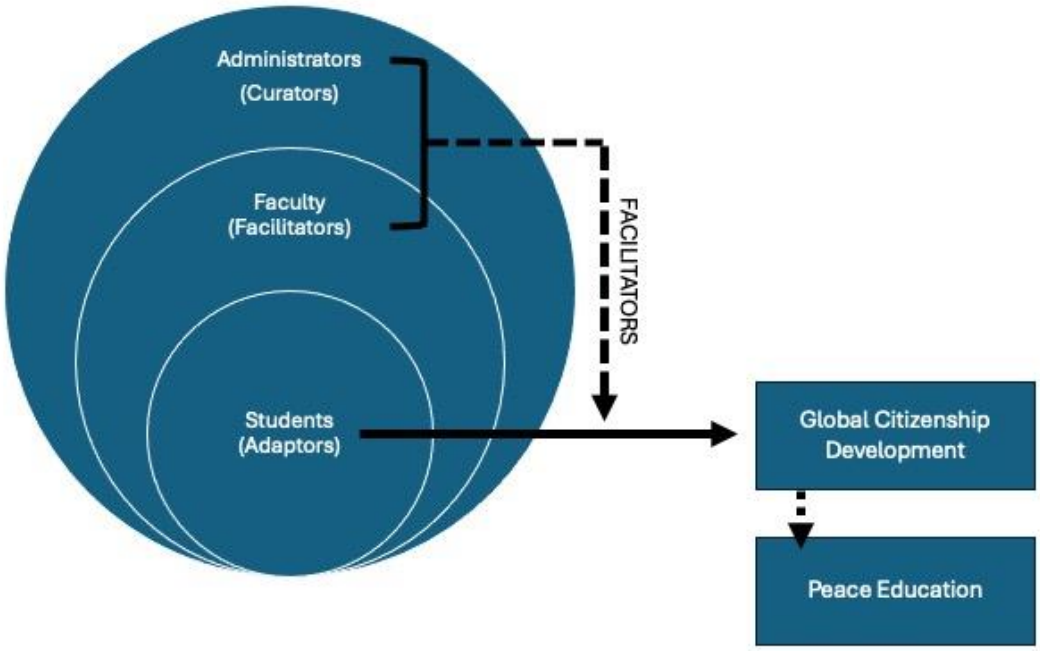
Exploring the complexity of global issues and engaging in multiple perspectives	Yes
Exploring issues of social justice locally and globally	Partially
Applying learning to real-world issues and contexts	Yes
Opportunities for learners to take informed, reflective action and have their voices heard	Yes
All ages	Yes
All areas of the curriculum	No
Enrichment of everyday teaching and learning	No
The whole school environment	Yes

Table 5. Legend: Green=meets, Yellow= partially meets, Red= fails to meet

Within my proposed model as displayed in Figure 1., the administrators serve as the "Curators" of global citizenship development. While they do not direct student learning outcomes, they facilitate the environment, policies, and support for global citizenship development. The faculty members are key facilitators, directly providing the environment and serving as guides for students to grow their learning outcomes. Finally, the students are the adaptors of global citizenship development. They take the skills taught from the experiences facilitated to them by the faculty and in the virtual exchanges and apply them in other contexts. The growth they experience in cultural awareness and understanding, and applications beyond the experience of virtual exchange is key to their continued development as global citizens. Being a global citizen is a mindset the students must possess rather than a document bestowed on

them displaying their citizenship from a government agency. Virtual exchanges in this case study show that the global classrooms were able to cultivate such a mindset.

Figure 1. Relationship between Stakeholders and Student Development Outcomes



Peace as an Unintended Outcome

The virtual exchanges create much-needed space for peacebuilding and levels of global understanding that are otherwise very limited if not near impossible under the conditions of COVID-19 when the study took place. While peace education was an unintended outcome with the faculty members facilitating the virtual exchanges, the conditions for peace education to take place were still present in all the virtual exchanges.

The administrators from the study identified that courses within the Global Classroom Initiative points toward possessing the components of peace education. One of the key takeaways was the university administration was able to identify peacebuilding through the use of project-based learning. This allowed for the students from UMD to connect with, have dialogue, and

come to a consensus with students from different countries while working together on group projects. This is in alignment with Simon et al.'s (2020) research, for the UMD students working in a virtual exchange with students from Baghdad, a country which they were once at war with. The project-based pedagogy expands on the Soliya program (2020) and Frier (2008) which utilizes cross-cultural dialogue solely to increase cultural understanding. The use of the collaborative projects within UMD's virtual exchanges allowed the students to come together, and still have intercultural dialogue, but expanded the cultural understanding by creating something within their international groups together. Working in international groups/multicultural teams also allowed the students to learn more about the different perspectives their international classmates had different from their own. The multicultural work additionally allowed the faculty to learn more about their international colleagues as well. Both faculty and students align with Lin et al.' (2015) perspectives on the importance of intercultural engagement as a cog for creating peace.

While there is indications that the conditions for peacebuilding within the virtual exchanges exist, it is important to note that the virtual exchanges still lack a full focus on peacebuilding and peace education as a specified learning outcome for their courses. The lack of a peace-building learning outcome is a gap within these virtual exchanges. It is important to note that Boyd provided specific examples of how virtual exchange could address issues of peacebuilding through contact. The formatting of the virtual exchanges aligns with Forbes's (2004) three crucial elements in the contact hypothesis, namely creating positive learning outcomes by upholding equity in status, the cooperative pursuit of a common goal, and social norms supporting group contact. The crucial elements were present in the virtual exchange, with students working on a joint project, facilitated by faculty, and an attempt at equity by faculty

through the financial support provided by the university as Sasha and Michael highlighted, or through the department as Joyce stated.

In bringing together students from vastly different backgrounds to work collaboratively on a project for their virtual exchange, as Boyd provided the Afghanistan example, students established rapport and worked with each other with care. According to Nodding (2012), this conduces towards elements peacebuilding as they will tend to do less harm to those from a different culture since they have engaged with someone else from that culture previously and know them as human beings just like themselves.

At the same time, Boyd also indicated enhanced ability for individuals, whether faculty in designing courses or the perspective students take in a course, in addressing massive global issues. Moreover, as Sasha addressed that peace education was a part of the pilot for the Global Classrooms Initiative, it was never a specific, focused learning outcome of any of the courses taught. While the administrators have visions on how virtual exchanges can be used to promote peace education, it falls on the faculty to have the motivation to add this component as a part of their learning outcomes within their courses in the Global Classroom Initiatives. This leaves a lot of room for further exploration of how expansion and growth in addressing peace education within these virtual exchanges.

While peacebuilding was not an outlined learning outcome on any of the faculty's syllabi it was still an unintended outcome of the courses according to several of the faculty members Rachel and Stephanie. Issues related to peace are touched upon, such as faculty members Stephanie and Rachel addressed issues of equality, gender violence, and protests for social justice. The data suggests that students in the virtual exchanges were able to participate in peace

education even though it was not a direct learning outcome in any of the virtual exchanges. They learned to work together, cultivating bonding, and supporting each other.

I posit that virtual exchanges by their nature, do have the components to facilitate peace education through their structure. Students in this study were able to recognize and communicate multiple aspects of peace education that they participated in. For example, Valeria highlighted her new emphasis on designs that focus on healing and building a sense of care for those impacted by a decade-long war. Adam's virtual exchange experience brought him to want to focus on stopping gendered violence. And multiple students shared in their autoethnographies that parallel conflicts between their domestic environment and that of their colleagues from their partner institutions. They found similarities that allowed them to collaborate on addressing social injustices and working towards peace.

Limitations

There were three areas of limitations I will address that impacted this study. The first I will address will be related to researcher bias for this study. This will be followed by the recruitment of the participants within the study, the third will address the participant demographics, and finally, I will address the generalizability of the findings from the study.

Researcher Bias

As I stated in chapter three, I did serve as a course instructor in one of the virtual exchanges. My positionality as a course instructor has a substantial impact on the topic I study. As Mertens (2015) states, "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world" (p. 236). Therefore, it is important to address who I am as a researcher and observer within this study. A heightened sense of self-awareness is vital to this research (Lincoln, 2009). From 2018 to 2020, I served as a co-instructor in a virtual global classroom between a public

research university in the United States and a private research university in Hong Kong. Serving as a course instructor presented some challenges in recruitment within the student sample population.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state insider/outsider status can affect the access a researcher has to a population and if access is gained then the level of information the participants are willing to share with the researchers might be limited. As an aspiring researcher who studies internationalization, my position as an American citizen can be viewed as an outsider by the students in the partner institutions. I can also be viewed as an outsider since being an instructor in the course my positionality is one of perceived power whereas theirs as a student has historically not been one of power.

There have been two ways I addressed my positionality with the students I study to gain access. The first has been to share my research efforts and endeavors with my students in my class. This allows for insider/insider access which can allow for greater trust and access to be established as positionalities between researcher and participants are more closely aligned (Merriam & Tisdel, 2016; Vicars, 2012). The other way this was shown was by being transparent with my university colleagues, two faculty who are also involved with developing and teaching virtual exchanges, and with university administrators who oversee and/or are involved with virtual exchanges.

Recruitment

The sample of the study did expand from the initial proposal. The original design was to focus solely on students' experiences, but then the project expanded to take a holistic examination of virtual exchanges at the university level, also incorporating the perspectives of administrators who oversee them, as well as the faculty who design and teach them.

One of the biggest limitations of this study is the challenges of travel due to COVID-19. This limitation has hindered the researcher's ability to observe the multiple classrooms in person. One of the ways that I have attempted to overcome this limitation is to work with my co-instructors in the virtual environment of their now fully online classroom via Zoom. COVID-19 has also shifted the course I was involved in teaching which was historically a blended-learning environment to a strictly virtual space. The majority of the UMD students who participated in their virtual coursework did so, fully remotely, and were not on campus. I encountered difficulty in recruiting students which could be due to the total online environment besides what I have mentioned regarding the power dynamic between an instructor and a student.

Participant Demographics

The participant demographics were not heavily detailed within the data collection phase of the study. While demographics such as participants' role within the institution, and their ethnic background were collected from each of the participants there were other demographic information that was not. This included participants' age, socioeconomic background, language fluencies, educational level, etc.

Generalizability

Another limitation of the study that needs to be addressed is the generalizability. As Creswell (2013) cautions, within qualitative case studies researchers must proceed with caution even with a large number of cases to not generalize the findings. It is important to note, that this case study and its findings were bound within one public research institution within the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The findings from the study therefore only apply to this institution of higher learning, as a cross-analysis from other institutions was not a part of the sample to provide a greater understanding of the findings across multiple settings.

Virtual Exchanges as a form of Internationalization

It is important to address the limitations that virtual exchanges possess as a modality within internationalizing education. While virtual exchanges provide students with the opportunity for international experiences when no others were available due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are forms of internationalization experiences that do not exist for the students. Student participants are not able to physically travel and experience the country as if they would have been during a student mobility experience, such as study abroad or enrolling as an international student. Rather than being able to fully immerse in a culture, as one with study abroad, virtual exchanges provide students with brief snips and exposures to other cultures. Within the students' experiences from the data collected for this study, the participants were not able to walk the souks of Baghdad gaining an understanding of how the citizens of the city live to get a sense of how their sites could be optimized when designing for in their urban design architecture studio. Similarly, the students participating in the virtual exchange with PolyU were not able to gain a sense of the student protests in Hong Kong to be able to compare the social unrest to the Black Lives Matter Movement happening just miles from the campus in Maryland.

Implications

I will address the implications of this study for practitioners (i.e., administrators and faculty) because they cultivate and facilitate exchanges within these spaces with international partners. I will also address the implications for researchers because there is a need for research on the impact of virtual exchanges. I will also examine the implications of myself throughout this research process, addressing my researcher reflexivity, a critical component of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013).

Implications for Practitioners

Structural inequities came to light within this study. While faculty and administrators addressed ways to increase the equity in the virtual exchanges there is no way to avoid them. Lin et al.'s (2015) framework on peace education dialogue does address the importance of equity, and with the virtual exchange participants of this study, equity took many different forms. The role of language in the classroom can be an important issue of concern for faculty members to consider when designing the courses. English was the primary language for the majority of the virtual exchanges, and with language as a powerful tool there comes the need to address equity in a multinational setting where people function in different languages hence, they need to be considered when constructing and facilitating virtual exchanges. The use of joint multilingual syllabi, translators, and pre-recorded lectures with multilingual captioning are some of the ways that this issue of language inequities can be addressed. As seen in this case study, creating multilingual learning spaces from a faculty point of view increased the equity of learning in several of the virtual exchanges.

Faculty and administrators provided their institutional support via grants and departmental funds to address the classroom inequities and to share their token of appreciation for the knowledge shared by their international partners. While, as Boyd pointed out, the provost at his institution was very supportive in providing the necessary resources for the increase of international education at this institution, not all institutions have the same financial support to develop, launch, and oversee virtual exchanges. Therefore, it is important to think about the ability of an institution to internationalize via virtual exchanges. It is also vital for university administrators to understand the dynamic and fluid scope of the needs of the faculty who teach in these unique learning environments. And to be able to respond to faculty requests to decrease the

socio-economic gap between institutions in the global north, such as UMD, and partner institutions in the global south. This was evident with Michael and Joyce being able to compensate their international partners with funds from their grants. It was also shown by Sonya being able to assist their international partners with small amounts, creating a form of reciprocity. Being able to use the grant funds for the virtual exchanges to close the equity gap between the institutions allows for stronger more equitable partnerships.

Moreover, administrators who oversee the virtual exchanges need to understand the challenges and the inequities that exist between tenured/tenure track and non-tenure track faculty. The tenure track faculty in the study have received additional support from their departments. This came about through compensation by their departments for teaching their courses as a part of their existing teaching loads. Whereas non-tenure track faculty and instructors taught their virtual exchanges as overloads with several volunteering their time to teach their virtual exchanges due to compensation not being available by their departments. The differing supports between tenure track and non-tenure track faculty need to be addressed to create equitable work environments for the university employees who seek to promote internationalization of higher education through virtual exchanges.

Implications for Research

The field of virtual exchange has expanded since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic from the aspect of research and scholarship. Increased research is now being conducted on digital and virtual internationalization. It is thus important to note that the state of virtual exchange has changed since the start of this study. As I stated in this project in 2019, I couldn't have imagined the change that education took in transitioning to a fully virtual modality for almost two years. COVID-19 has served as a catalyst for the expansion of online learning and

the inclusion of virtual exchange as a part of internationalization within higher education. As I was interested in how much COVID-19 impacted research, I conducted a scoping review with several colleagues and found that 36 open-sourced, peer-reviewed studies surrounding virtual exchange had been published between March 2020 and August 2023 (Weaver et al., 2024). The publications over this time address three primary areas. One, virtual exchanges facilitated intercultural awareness; two, virtual exchanges promoted collaborative engagement and thinking, and three, virtual exchanges addressed areas of equity (Weaver et al., 2024). And while this area of research has expanded due to the catalyst of COVID-19 there are still areas for growth.

There are certain areas that I would address when it comes to virtual exchanges following this dissertation. The first would be looking at the equity surrounding the modality of the virtual exchange's hybrid instruction versus a fully remote environment. Hybrid learning is the combination of in-person and remote learning, where fully remote refers to any education modality which is fully online (FIU.EDU, 2024). From this sub issues of equity can be investigated such as student burnout in a fully remote environment. As previously noted, I had several students agree to participate in this study, then few were able to follow through. Another would be in a fully remote environment where you are unable to see how the students interact with one another as easily compared to resident instruction classroom observations. Lastly in a fully remote environment, one is unable to do a site visit to the partner institution.

Implication for More Inclusive Future Research

As I previously stated, my study transitioned from looking at and comparing two institutions to just collecting data from one institution. As a result of this, it limits who the storytellers are in the data and who can share their experiences. I would like myself and future

researchers to be able to conduct a comparative study on multiple institutions from multiple countries and cultures to see how these findings may differ.

This study took a lens of the United States to an international approach; however, it is also important to look at the virtual exchanges from the context of institutions in other countries. This study only considered the participants within the case of an American institution, rather than expanding the cases to include their international institutional partners. While there were non-American-born participants in the study (two student interviewees, two instructors, and one administrator) all the findings conveyed were from the perspective of an American institution. The participants did address the importance and impact their international counterparts played in the development of global citizenship development (administrators, instructors, and students), as well as the role in peace education (students) within the virtual exchanges, the voices, perceptions, and experiences of the international partners (administrators, faculty, and students) are missing from this study. This can have an impact on the power dynamics and the equities needed to succeed in both peace education and global citizenship development within educational settings. Thus, an understanding of the perspectives of virtual exchange international partners is called for in future research.

It is important to point out that while positive equity has been established in these partnerships, the current reality of the global system that we find ourselves in is that even if institutions invest equally in virtual exchanges and student mobility programs like study abroad, one party could still be seen as more powerful or prestigious. For virtual exchanges to be seen in an equal light as other internalization efforts, there will need to be a systematic shift in the mindset of participants, faculty, and administrators, as well as the field of international education

to create a sense of global family when it comes to holistically preparing students to be successful citizens in our global society.

Reflexivity

As I examine myself as a researcher and evolving scholar with a focus on international education and online learning, I feel that this dissertation has allowed me to grow in a magnitude of ways. Before this project, I had always partnered with other individuals to co-create research projects and publications. My dissertation made me focus on an area of study, e.g. virtual exchange, which connects the two biggest interests that I have as an educator. I have always been passionate and driven to understand the experiences of others from different cultural backgrounds and I've tried to incorporate that into my profession throughout my career. Previous international experiences have expanded my understanding of how individuals operate within a global society based on their global cultural competencies. The other aspect of my career that has aligned with this dissertation has been my background as an online educator for over a decade. Being able to connect both of these worlds to create more well-rounded individuals when it comes to their own cultural competencies and understandings of global citizenship and peace education through online learning has been a fantastic opportunity.

From the experience of my dissertation, I have been able to work with colleagues as well as myself as a lone author to focus on advancing the scholarship of virtual exchanges. As a practitioner, I have taken the lessons and the skills learned and I have been able to apply them as an advocate for virtual exchanges at institutions in organizations outside of the scope of the University of Maryland. While my growth in the maturation has not been a linear process the lessons that I have taken away from this project have truly made me a stronger scholar, practitioner, holistic educator, and advocate for virtual exchanges.

Summary of Study

The use of virtual exchanges to promote global citizenship throughout an institution was found at the administrative, faculty, and student levels. The university and departmental administrators served as curators of global citizenship development providing support via funding, pedagogy models, and navigating several of the international partnerships. Faculty served as facilitators of global citizenship development both within the classroom and outside of the classroom. The faculty members were voices for equity seeking change in university policies on how their grant funds could be spent. Moreover, the faculty served as facilitators in the classroom, shaping the project-based projects and challenging their students to think in a non-local mindset. The student participants in the virtual exchanges were the adoption of global citizenship. The students were able to recognize their development of global cultural competence and apply their growth by sharing their applied experiences.

Peace education within the virtual exchanges by their structure can exist and be a departure from previous literature. Students were still able to develop much-needed peacebuilding skills that otherwise would not have been possible due to this being the sole form of internalization open to them and their community at the time of the study.

Future iterations of institutions adopting virtual exchanges should take into account their capacity to internationalize and promote global citizenship amongst the institution even during turbulent times. A greater emphasis on utilizing virtual exchanges as a form of peacebuilding and peace education must take place. While this study showed that peace was an unintended consequence, faculty members should incorporate directed learning outcomes for peacebuilding within virtual exchanges.

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Interview/Focus Group Protocol

Administrators

Demographic Questions:

Where are you from?
How long have you been at your institution?
What roles have you had at your institution?
Can you walk me through your participation within international education as an administrator?

What is your experience with the Global Classrooms Project at UMD or Virtual Exchange as a whole?
Can you tell me about what some of your motivations were for wanting to support the creation and expansion of the global classrooms project/ virtual exchange?
What's the institutional imperative that drives virtual exchange within UMD?

- How does virtual exchange advance the mission of the institutions?

What type of institutional/departmental support is offered to faculty wanting to start or participate in the UMD Global Classrooms Project?

- How did you get connected with an international partner?

What is the priority or characteristics the university looks into for international partners?

- Is there anything that would exclude your institution from partnering with another?
    - Political?
    - Connectivity?
    - Fiscal?
    - Outside existing partnerships (U21)

Has working with in international education had any effect or changed your views personally or professionally?

- How does that challenge your personal views?
- How does that challenge your personal values?
- How does that challenge your personal assumptions?

What languages are your virtual exchange courses taught in? Do they require the use of translators?

Do your courses require non-English language requirements from the UMD students?
Can you tell me about what you are trying to do to prepare yourself to be a global citizen?

Peace Education

Social Justice issues locally and globally….

Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted international education at your institution?

What about virtual exchange at your institution/ within your department?

Has social unrest in the United States and/or your partner institution's countries impacted your institution's virtual exchange partnerships in any way?

Apply learning to real-world issues and context

Tell me about what it was like working on a global team as an administrator?

- What have been some of the greatest challenges in trying to establish and maintain virtual exchange programs with international partners?
    - Has there anything that was unforeseen or surprising?

- What have been some of the successes your institution/department had with your international partners in their virtual exchanges?

How does your institution try to create equity between it and your virtual international partners?

- Who's voice is most heard?

Have there been times when working as a global team brought to light differing or conflicting views between you/ your institution and an international partner?

Follow up question if yes….Can you describe how did working as a global team with members with differing views from you own towards a common goal go?

How did you work together towards a common goal within virtual exchange?

- What were some of the strategies you used to reach this goal?
- What type of communication did you use?
- Did any conflict arise? If so, how did you address it?

What ways can or has virtual exchange at your institution assisted in peacebuilding, either at the institutional level, classroom level, or individual level?

Where did you feel most comfortable to have dialogue with your international partners?

Do you feel that students in a virtual exchange have an equal voice in their virtual exchange course?

Do you feel that faculty in a virtual exchange have an equal voice in their virtual exchange course?

Has utilizing virtual exchange led to any professional development opportunities for you that you otherwise would not have had?

Presentations

Publications

Field studies

Faculty (Instructor of Record)

Demographic Questions:
Where are you from?
How long have you been at your institution?
What roles have you had at your institution?

Can you walk me through your participation within international education before you started this course?

Can you tell me about what some of your motivations were for wanting to create and/or teach a global classroom/ participate in a virtual exchange?

Tell me about how you have explored your local-global connections here the University of Maryland/ your international partner?

Possible Probing questions:

How did you get connected with you international partner?

Has working with your international partner had any effect or changed your views personally or professionally?

- How does that challenge your personal views?
- How does that challenge your personal values?
- How does that challenge your personal assumptions?

What language is your course taught in? Do you use translators if needed? Does your course require non-English language requirements for your students?

Social Justice issues locally and globally….

- Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your course?
- Has social unrest in the United States and/or your partner institution's country impacted your course?

Apply learning to real-world issues and context

Tell me about what it was like working on a global team as a faculty member?

- What challenges did you have with your international partners?
    - Was there anything that was unforeseen or surprising?
        - Anything with course design?
        - Internet connectivity?

What were the successes you had with your international partners?

- What surprised you the most about the experience?
- Whose voice is most heard between you and your international partner?

Opportunities for learners to take informed reflective action to have their voices heard

- What role did you take on your team?
- How did you express your role to your team?
- Was this the role you wanted?

Do your other classes address global issues?

If yes, how? Or if not, why not?

Can you tell me about what you are trying to do to prepare yourself to be a global citizen?

Do you feel like you grew as a global leader as a result of this experience? If so how?

Did your teams ever talk about the social turmoil that have happened in the United States and international partner's country over the past couple of years?

Peace Education

Were there ways working as a global team brought to light differing or conflicting views between you and the international partner?

Follow up question if yes….Can you describe how did working as a global team with members with differing views from you own towards a common goal go?

How did you work together towards a common goal? Even if creating the class/co teaching

- What were some of the strategies you used to reach this goal?
- What type of communication did you use?
- Did any conflict arise? If so, how did you address it?

What do you want your role within peacebuilding to be after participating in the global experience?

Where did you feel most comfortable to have dialogue with your international partners?

Did students feel like they had an equal voice in the course?

Has this partnership (utilizing virtual exchange) led to any professional development opportunities that you otherwise would not have had?

Presentations
Publications
Field studies

Students

Demographic Questions:
Where are you from?
What are you currently studying?
Why did you choose to study at the University of Maryland?
How long have you been in the US?
Where all have you lived?

Can you tell me about what some of your motivations were for wanting to register and take a global classroom/ participate in a virtual exchange?

Tell me about how you have explored your local-global connections here the University of Maryland/(partner institution country)?

Possible Probing questions:

- How does that challenge your personal views?
- How does that challenge your personal values?
- How does that challenge your personal assumptions?

Social Justice issues locally and globally….

How have you been able to COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest in the United States and (partner institution country) has

- What did you know about social unrest in (partner institution country) / The United States prior to this class?
- How does that challenge your personal values?
- How does that challenge your personal assumptions?

Apply learning to real-world issues and context

Tell me about what it was like working on a global team?

- What challenges did you have with your international partners?
- What were the successes you had with your international partners?
- What surprised you the most about the experience?

Opportunities for learners to take informed reflective action to have their voices heard

- What role did you take on your team?
- How did you express your role to your team?
- Was this the role you wanted?

Do your other classes address global issues? If yes, how?

Can you tell me about what you are trying to do to prepare yourself to be a global citizen?

Do you feel like you grew as a global leader? If so how?

Did your teams ever talk about the social turmoil that have happened in the United States and (partner institution country) over the past couple of years?

How did conversations with your international partners impact the way you view the world?

Can you describe how did working as a global team with members with differing views from you own towards a common goal go?

- What were some of the strategies you used to reach this goal?
- What type of communication did you use?
- Did any conflict arise? If so, how did you address it?

What do you want your role within peacebuilding to be after participating in the global experience?

Where did you feel most comfortable to have dialogue with your international partners?

Did students feel like they had an equal voice?