Planting the Seed And Waiting for Blooming
Fostering Internationalization and Intercultural Exchanges in The COIL Curriculum at Sungkyunkwan University

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SKKU WAVE (K-COIL) program

• Launched in May 2023 to promote students’ intercultural exchanges and learning.

• Joined the pilot program in Fall, 2023.
  • Undergraduate course: “Foundation of Curriculum Studies” (FCS)
  • In collaboration with a lecturer from the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University (NIE-NTU)

• Participated in the official program since Spring, 2024.
  • Co-developed a new undergraduate/graduate course: “Schooling in a Future Society” (SFS)

• **SKKU is at the beginning stage of running a COIL curriculum.**
The Context of SKKU

- One of the big 5 elite colleges in Korea
- Despite students’ strong academic abilities, their English proficiency is greatly varied.
- Despite the university’s strive for internationalization, students’ exposure to intercultural experiences is greatly varied.
- School of Education/Department of Education (DOE) is one of the most localized schools/departments because students are prepared for teaching profession in the Korean public education system.
Pilot Stage (Fall, 2023): Foundation of Curriculum Studies

• One of the required courses for students of the DOE
• “Start small”
• Korean-medium course with some international content (e.g. curriculum theories, examples of national curricula, global issues in curriculum studies)
• Assigned 2 weeks of the 15 weeks to collaborate with partner instructor
  • 1st week: participatory class observation (Korean & English)
  • 2nd week: partner instructor led the session, introducing the Singapore education system and national curriculum (English)
Pilot Stage (Fall, 2023): Foundation of Curriculum Studies
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What I Learned from The Pilot

• Many students are much interested to learn about other countries’ education systems and issues.

• Despite students’ diverse English proficiency and shyness, they were excited and enjoyed interacting with the partner instructor.

• **Student-centered, participatory approach** is much more appropriate than lecture format to stimulate their engagement with the partner instructor.
Intermediate Stage (Spring, 2024): Schooling in a Future Society (SFS)

• Collaborated with partner instructor to design a new course, including course content, readings, assignments, and projects.

• Designed a new, English-medium course targeted to upper-undergraduate, masters’ students, and exchange students.

Course Syllabus

What the course is about:
In present times of rapid digitalization and social change since the pandemic, schooling in many countries is facing substantial demand for transformation. In this course, you will explore the meaning and role of schooling for addressing many serious social issues and improving its role for serving our community and society better. You will particularly deliberate on the following questions:

1) What is the relationship between society, schooling, and education?
2) What schooling should be like for human beings and society?
3) What is the meaning of schooling? Why do we need schooling instead of home schooling or AI tutors?

We will navigate these questions together by delving into various ideas raised by prominent international scholars and engaging them with our own thoughts and perspectives. You are encouraged to examine those ideas with critical perspectives, raise important questions, and share your ideas with us. Through extensive communication and collaboration in class, we will envision a more meaningful and responsible schooling for all the people in our society.

English Proficiency Requirement:
The course will be offered entirely in English, including readings, course activities, and assignments. To participate in and get the most out of the course, you therefore need to be ready to exercise and grow your English proficiency. Although solid English proficiency will be
Intermediate Stage (Spring, 2024): Schooling in a Future Society (SFS)

- **Student diversity**: 3 international (graduate) students and 14 local (undergraduate) students
- **Students are seated in groups**: 5 groups in total; 3-4 students in each group
- **Partner instructor joins every session remotely via Zoom.**
- **Student-centered, participatory approach**
  - Reading group
  - 2-minute speech
  - Discussion on reading
  - Application of reading
  - Wrap up
- **Assessments**: 1) Response to reading; 2) Design-a-future-school project
Students’ Intercultural Exchanges in SFS

- Course readings drawn from various contexts: Australia, Netherlands, UK, US, Singapore
- Reading group to share students’ diverse understanding and interpretation on the readings
- Carefully designed course discussions and activities to promote collaboration and intercultural understanding
  - Create a collaborative historical timeline of modern schooling
  - A letter to your future child’s teacher
- Partner instructors’ significant contribution to build on and expand students’ understanding on the key ideas of the reading
Example of Students’ Intercultural Exchanges in SFS

Reading group

Partner instructor’s input in class

David Hamilton (1990):

“I am unwilling to claim that schooling is necessarily a ‘good thing’. I do not therefore, regard its present form as the unfolding of a glorious idea disseminated by Christian missionaries more than a thousand years ago. Instead, I try to acknowledge that schooling is a two-edged social instrument. It is as much a tool of oppression as it is a lever of liberation. The history of schooling, therefore, is best seen as a history of changing circumstances, not a history of inevitable progress.” (p. xiii)

The future of schooling is therefore... ??

Public schooling should serve the common weal

• the common weal means the public sphere  
• ‘force of common use’ and ‘for the good of us all’

JE: Public schooling (not privatised commodity for marketplace selling/buying) in a future society should serve the common good in what sense? For whose benefit? Why?
Example of Students’ Intercultural Exchanges in SFS: “A Letter to My Child’s Teacher”

A letter to my child’s teacher
Imagine you are parents of a child who are about to entering school. Write a letter to your child’s teacher that explains what you expect your child to learn from school.

Yoon-sang
For my child, I want you to get
him into socially participatory courses which demands situations that should talk to
gets some scores.

Goeon
Good afternoon...
Since my child is in elementary school now, I want my child to be
social and happy at school. Hope she can enjoy the time in
her class. Thank you!

Hyejeong
Good evening!
My child just get in primary
school. Thank you for your attention to my child.
I want you to teach my child
about how to treat others
respectably in a community from
school. It is because at home,
we can’t teach rules or manners
in social life elaborately even
though we are trying to
 teach him. But in school, there are
many classmates who are
around his age and diverse
types of people. So it would be
a good opportunity for him to
be socialized even if it is tough at
first.

Yoojin
Dear teacher,
I hope my child gets along with
other friends well and learn how
to cooperate with each other.
If he seems to have trouble getting
along, I hope you give him a hint of
confidence. I want him to
earn strong social skills in
class. I look forward to your help.
I thank you.

Luca
Dear future teacher of my
beloved child. Today marks the
first day that my child will enter
your school. With this letter, I
would like to make some
suggestions about what I would
like my child to learn.

1. Please teach my child what
it means to try and be good.
Explain why trying to do
well is important, and how
this will help everyone to
be happier in life.

2. Please also teach my child
the importance of getting
along with other children.
Especially with children that
are not liked.

3. Please explain the
fundamentals of knowledge,
such as mathematics,
language and history.

4. Lastly, I want my child to
be happy. Please show my kid
the importance of having fun,
and do not be too harsh.
Thank you for taking my wishes
into account. Best of luck with
Dart.

Hynho
Dear Mr. Kim,
I am glad I can leave my child
with you. I think she needs a lot
of interaction with other people.
I strongly believe the idea that
school is a kind of society, so
you don’t need to care more
about my daughter. All we want
from you is that you don’t show
discriminatory attitude only to
our daughter.
Thank you.

LIN
The most important thing I hope
my child could gain in school is
the ability to choose who they
want to be and take
responsibility for it.
I hope he/she has the opportunity
to see a bigger world in school
and constantly outgrows his/her
dreams until they become
clear.
Regardless of his/her academic
performance in school, he/she is able
to maintain confidence and believe
in the potential to achieve
his/her dreams.

Nayoung Kang
Dear teacher,
Hope you are doing well. Since
my daughter is entering
elementary school this year,
I would like my daughter to learn
how to communicate with others
in a respectful way.
I also want her to internalize basic
rules to live in a society which is full
of different individuals. This may
include sitting down and focus
on the lecture, following the
teaching provided.
Thank you.

Gyeonhan
Dear, Ms. Park (Elementary
school teacher)
Good day, Ms. Park.
This is Lucy’s mother.
First I would like to
appreciate your efforts to teach
and lead my child in advance.
I have tried my best to grow him
as a friendly, considerate and
loving child, but I am sure
that he would make some mistakes
and be sometimes left behind
in certain subjects because I did
not really push him to do
something he has not tried before.

Jiseon Kim
Dear Sarah’s homeroom teacher,
Hi______, I am Sarah’s mom.Kim.
I feel really worried to send my
daughter to school for the first
time in her life. Since she is little
bit shy, I might be really thankful
if you help her to make friends,
not having troubles spending
time in school without me, and
spend happy school life.
I personally think that giving
materials is stressful or mathless
knowledge.

Jeongwoo Hoo
Hello! I’m Hyoyee (Heo)’s
teacher. I’m a little nervous that I
become the teacher of an
elementary school student. I
hope my son learns about
himself. Learn what he likes
and what makes him happy
by learning and experiencing
various things in his school life.
I also hope my son, Hyoyee
learns how to live together as a
social member of a community.

Hyeongyu
Dear teacher,
Please teach my child how to
interact with others, even if she
is not good at studying.
Things like how to speak with respect
to the other person, how to honor
adults. How to admit her mistakes
and apologize.
Studying is an essential element
in Korea, so I hope she could
have a knowledge to understand
schoolwork.

Jeongwoo(Cho)
Hello teacher,
I don’t want many things, I want
my child can understand that
there are many different people.
In addition, it will be nice if my
child can learn about that she is
not the center of the earth.
Thank you!

Yoyo

What I Am Learning from The Course

• Learning from students’ diverse perspectives and ideas

• ‘Start small’ works! Instead of having a grand plan, adding/changing a small component in a form of quick, simple activity (e.g. 2-minute speech, reading group) can do much to facilitate students’ intercultural exchanges.

• To maximize students’ intercultural exchanges, it is desirable to take a student-centered, participatory approach in teaching.

• Learning from partner instructor’s way and approach to teaching: A great professional development opportunity
Challenges I Have Encountered… (And How I Have Been Dealing With…)  

- **Much administrative** work was needed to ‘officially’ invite the partner.  
  - Ask for and utilize the support from your institution: Letter of Invitation, classroom and technology arrangement, etc.  
  - Be strategic with choosing the partner: Choose the one you are comfortable to interact with and who understands your teaching philosophy and preferences.  

- **Difficulties with interacting with partner university’s students** because of the necessity of additional administrative procedures and vastly different contexts of each institution  
  - The need for university-wise partnership and collaboration for running COIL courses  
  - Requires top-down support with bottom-up initiative  

- **Local students’ substantial variance in English proficiency and international exposure**: COIL in Korean universities may exclude students who are interested in intercultural exchanges but lack confidence in English.  
  - Consider ways to address students’ worries about their English proficiency and promote interaction with foreigners, such as more opportunities to meet and interact with exchange students.  
  - More international components need to be integrated in the entire university/department curriculum, not just in a few courses.
Thank you!
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