

Seneca-Artevelde University Student Collaboration Group Project

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all sectors of the economy, and higher education is no exception. Online teaching and learning have become a new norm. Higher education institutions are getting ready for post-pandemic life which would certainly be different than pre-pandemic life. The lockdowns caused by the pandemic have created challenges for institutions of higher education at various fronts, especially for those students looking for Work Integrated Learning (WIL) or co-op placements.

Seneca College and Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in Belgium took this pandemic as an opportunity and initiated a virtual project where students from both institutions can work collaboratively to develop an export market plan for Aluminum Construction Develtere (ACD), a leading Belgium greenhouse manufacturer and a major market player in Europe. In addition to their success in Europe, they are now looking to explore new opportunities by expanding into Canada. Figures 1 and 2 show two different types of greenhouses manufactured by ACD.



Figure 1: Sloping wall greenhouses manufactured by ACD





Figure 2: Straight wall greenhouse manufactured by ACD

The main objective of this project is to provide an opportunity for students from both institutions to learn how to collaborate virtually in teams, solve problems, communicate, and make decisions. These are all vital employability skills to have in today's world of business.

The participating students were eighth-semester students in a capstone course in Seneca's Honours Bachelor of Commerce – Business Management (BBM) degree program and students from Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in Belgium completing their final year project in the Bachelor of International Business Management degree program. Students from both institutions will work collaboratively on Microsoft Teams under the supervision of Professor Abdul Naveed Tariq from Seneca and Professor Marie Gildemyn from Artevelde to complete this project. Students will follow the agreed-upon framework that includes key milestones. The project findings would help ACD Belgium assess the Canadian greenhouse market and adjust their strategies before entering the Canadian market. The end product of this collaborative project would be an export market plan with recommended strategies and action plans for ACD to implement.

We are excited and look forward to a successful completion of this project, as well as developing this collaborative partnership for the future under the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative.

To learn more about COIL at Seneca, see **Peter García Sjögrim's** article, [Creating Cross-Cultural Learning Experiences for My Students](#) in this issue.

View the [March 2021 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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