Cynthia Fountaine, Southern Illinois University School of Law

When Life Gives You Lemons: Creating Meaningful International Educational Opportunities for Students Despite the Pandemic

As the saying goes, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. The COVID-19 pandemic has handed a lot of lemons to people all over the world. It has impacted us in unimaginably awful ways, producing a global death toll of over 2.8 million. It has had a profound impact on education, including legal education, keeping students out of brick-and-mortar classrooms and forcing them into virtual classrooms. We have all had to adapt our teaching methods and materials to enable students to continue learning.

International education could have been a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic too since international travel stopped and since most of us have been deeply immersed in the abrupt pivot to virtual teaching. However, as this Symposium demonstrates, that’s not what has happened. Instead, we have created new ways to provide international learning opportunities for our students.

This talk will reflect on my experience this year working with an international advocacy team that brings together students from Russia, Kenya, and the United States to virtually compete in the Nuremberg Moot Court Competition in Nuremberg, Germany. This experience has been a unique and rewarding one for the students, and it has also been professionally rewarding for the faculty members at all three schools who have worked with the students to make this possible. Also, this talk will consider the longer-term collaboration that was the foundation for this tri-continental advocacy team.