CUSTOMER CASE
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Teaching statistics via distance learning

Distance Learning University Switzerland (Fernuni Schweiz) is a young university institute based in Brig. Since 1992, numerous courses at Bachelor's and Master's level have been offered in the form of e-Learning or blended learning scenarios.

A report by lic. phil. Matthias Kubat, Coordinator of Psychology Studies at the Distance Learning University Switzerland

UNIVERSITÄRE FERNSTUDIEN SCHWEIZ

Distance learning can be the perfect solution for people who want to or have to combine job, family and studying, and thus represents an alternative rather than competition for classroom studies. This is clearly apparent for example in the student customer base of the Distance Learning University Switzerland, which is indeed very heterogeneous, but has an average age of 38, which is markedly higher than that of the traditional classroom-based Swiss universities. More than 2,000 students are currently making use of this facility and taking their degree by distance learning in either German or French.

Working with SPSS Statistics is an important element of the courses

The courses on offer at the Distance Learning University Switzerland also include a degree course in psychology. As with all social sciences subjects, as well as a sound basic training in the fundamental subjects, great weight is also attached to training the students in methodologies. The university has worked with SPSS Statistics since it first started offering this course, both in the statistics presentations and also in the application-oriented modules (such as experimental exercises or the students' dissertations). The software has always met our needs and was thus the perfect solution for us. In addition, the numerous textbooks documenting the use of statistics by means of SPSS make the teaching easier for the students. I am pleased here to mention the wonderfully refreshing textbook by Andy Field "Discovering statistics using SPSS", which is also a great help for weaker students since it gives them an understanding of the statistical material, which is often

Matthias Kubat:

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felt to be very dry, without them having any fear of statistics.

The use of modern technology is particularly great in distance learning

It has become increasingly apparent during our teaching of statistics that our blended learning scenario does not present any obstacles at all – in fact quite the opposite: With the modern day technological options, I believe the potential is even superior compared with traditional classroom teaching. Instead of doing exercises on the spot in computer pools which are bursting at the seams, students work on their tasks individually at home. With SPSS the students can subsequently follow the solution step by step in real time and compare it with their own approach. This allows them to learn at their own pace, and the video can be watched several times if necessary.

With IBM SPSS Statistics in our methodology training we can also rely on a software solution which has been one of the standards in the social sciences for decades and performs convincingly well. The same also applies to the always flawless customer service we receive from Dynelytics, with its immediate and flexible support. So a big thank you not only to the developer, but also to the support team in Zürich.

Learn more about Distance Learning University Switzerland: www.fernuni.ch