



HÖGSKOLAN DALARNA

Big Fan of Zero Administration

CASE STUDY

With over 10 000 students, 40 educational programmes, and more than 200 subject courses on offer, Dalarna University College in Sweden, has found the Fronter Open Learning Platform to be their answer to efficient organisation and administration.

Högskolan Dalarna was established in 1977, and today has some 10 000 students pursuing studies at the university's two campuses in Borlänge and Falun. With an increased proportion of students (almost 50%) involved in distance learning, the need for a solid technological infrastructure was, and is, key to the organisational functioning of the university. Ragnar Olafsson, ICT technician and trainer explains further...

When first implementing the Fronter learning platform in August 2005, Dalarna saw Fronter as meeting the basic need to organise courses.

Generating structure, users and access

Dalarna had a system in place that dealt with all user and course information, as well as LADOK (the national system used for documentation of academic information at higher education institutions in Sweden). One of the main advantages of the Fronter platform, is that integration with existing systems is an easy and simple process. This allows all information to be automatically updated.

“Any information already created elsewhere should if possible be reused. Two sets of the same information created by people are bound to differ.”

Preparing the Teachers

An introductory training called *Fronter Information Step 1* was given to all university teachers (totalling over 400). This ensured that all teachers received a quick start in Fronter basics and the opportunity to express any questions or concerns. The attendees were encouraged to concentrate on the basic tools before using more advanced tools such as the Learning Path – this is to ease the stress that many people feel for a new computerized system that they are expected to master.

Fronter Information Step 1 resulted in the largest ever educational effort of staff members. This, the user manuals and instructional videos available, have kept necessary Fronter support to a minimum.

'What we needed was a structure that mirrored the educational activity, rather than the building where education usually takes place. Therefore we needed to be able to generate course rooms for all instances of each course.'

Ragnar Olafsson
ICT Technician and Trainer
Hogskolan Dalarna



The default layout of a course room is decided by a reference group of teachers, who after considering the needs of students and staff, create default course room structures and tool packages.

In such a large educational institution, 'the teachers feel liberated by not having to manage the structure of the content, and being able to focus on the content of the course itself.'

Conclusion

With the Fronter Open Learning Platform, Dalarna University College is able to meet their needs in a way that minimises administration to the point where all organisation is handled by a 'well-oiled' and carefully implemented system – no single individual is needed to administer the Fronter system, it's simply not needed!

'Hogskolan Dalarna has no Fronter Administrator – It's simply not needed!'

