

## Recommendations by the University Board on the Internationalization of Teaching at the FernUniversität

The internationalization of digital teaching is a strategically important issue for the FernUniversität. As the university for students from different educational backgrounds and special life situations, international digital formats enrich the FernUniversität's teaching portfolio. They offer a diverse student body valuable insights into global perspectives and opportunities to engage with educators and fellow students from different cultural and academic backgrounds. Digital and international teaching formats are therefore a key element in shaping the international dimension of distance learning at the FernUniversität. They provide non-traditional, often working students with viable alternatives to physical mobility.

In recent years, a range of models for digital-international collaboration between teaching staff, students, and international partners have emerged under frameworks such as 'Internationalization at Home,' 'Curriculum Internationalization,' 'Digital Internationalization,' 'Virtual Mobility,' and 'Virtual exchange.' These initiatives aim to equip students who cannot participate in physical mobility due to their particular life circumstances with global perspectives and intercultural skills. The Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath have made these offerings considerably more relevant at on-campus universities. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has also been offering various programs in this area since May 2020 and is integrating digital elements into its standard programs. As a result, the bandwidth of international digitalization in Germany is steadily growing.

Since 2016, the FernUniversität's faculties have developed and implemented a range of international teaching projects in various formats and on a smaller scale, funded through the "Internationalization" initiative of the Innovative Teaching program (*Förderprogramm Innovative Lehre*, FILeh). The resulting community of practice developed guidelines for implementation that are available to all teaching staff at the FernUniversität. Further projects are currently being set up, also with funding from the DAAD.

In order to further develop the distance learning system, the University Board urges the faculties to expand upon these initial efforts in international digitalization and to actively promote the initiation of new projects. At the same time, the visibility of the offerings in the degree programs should be improved so that a larger number of students can benefit from them. Key elements of this are the cooperation of teaching staff and students with partner universities and the joint development of teaching content.

The University Board therefore recommends that, by the end of 2023, the faculties should integrate:

- **In all bachelor's courses:** At least one international module in the **elective area** in all degree programs;
- **In all master's courses:** At least one international module as a **mandatory offer**.

The University Board emphasizes that, in some cases, formal provisions must be established within course and examination regulations. It also encourages faculties to support teaching staff in their initiatives and to enable the implementation of new course elements.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.fernuni-hagen.de/english/university/international-office/studying-teaching/index.shtml>

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