NEO
by CYPHER LEARNING

Hochschule Furtwangen University

Looking for the perfect blended learning environment

Introduction

The Hochschule Furtwangen University (HFU) is a University of Applied Sciences with a student body of almost **7000 students**. We focus on computer science, engineering, economics, business, and applied medical sciences.

What were the university's challenges before NEO?

The problems that we had before using NEO were diverse. The courses were decentralized and not standardized. Instructors were not accountable and records were kept on paper. If an instructor was unable to teach due to illness or personal circumstance, lessons were cancelled. In addition, a lot of instruction was taking place from books, supported with audio played on CD players. Furthermore, every time an experienced instructor left us, the course they had been teaching was essentially reset.

We felt the need to get an LMS in order to manage the LC courses more effectively and to **provide students with a blended learning environment**. We also wanted to offer instructors a better, more efficient way of delivering content and we wanted to centralize the administration of our courses, specifically with regards to enrolment.

For us it was very important to have a **standardization of our curriculum** and learning outcomes, management of our course offerings, as well as establish a link between in-class work and foreign language learning outside of the classroom.
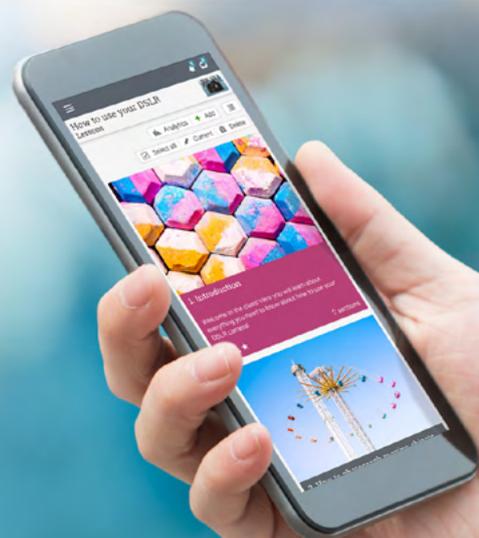
How did you find a solution?

We were introduced to NEO by a friend and colleague back in 2011 when it was still EDU 2.0. We choose NEO because it is very user friendly and very well suited for foreign language instruction.

Teachers enjoy features such as:

- The online quiz function, as it allows us to check student comprehension **quickly and efficiently**. In times past, grading quizzes took too much time and therefore they were less frequent.

- Submitting homework online and being able to use rubrics to grade it. NEO functions as a central repository for submitted work and makes **record keeping a cinch.**

- Lessons which allow us to integrate multi-media, quizzes, and discussions, as this makes teaching and learning **more enjoyable.** In addition, we can design lessons and then 'evolve' them by deselecting things that didn't work and replacing them with lessons and sections that **work better.**

- Copying lessons from one class to another, as this makes prep **so much easier.**

Students are also very pleased with NEO. Student feedback indicates that they are most appreciative of being able to see results in real time. They can maintain an overview of their attendance record, and know how they are doing at any one point in time, which in turn, provides them with the opportunity to **mediate their participation and study behaviour more appropriately.**

Student and teacher feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Teachers have stated that they are "having fun creating interesting lessons" and that there is less time-consuming admin work to do, such as photocopying, grading, or answering questions about student records. As indicated above, students especially appreciate knowing how they are doing at all times. Also, students appreciate that they get back submitted work much faster than they did before

What results have you noticed since using NEO?

Both teachers and students have become more involved in the teaching and learning process, as the learning process continues after our students leave the classroom. There is now a continuous connection between teaching staff, students, and admins, which means **questions are answered more quickly and efficiently.** Records are kept in large part automatically and are all centrally managed, resulting in no more records being misplaced by individuals before they are digitized.