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## **FLEXIBLE LEARNING - THE IMPORTANCE OF A VARIETY OF TEACHING METHODS TO GET STUDENTS TO BE ACTIVE IN THEIR LEARNING**

### **Abstract:**

The University of Akureyri is located in North Iceland and was founded in September 1987, by establishing two Faculties, in Health Sciences and Industrial Management. In the beginning, there were 34 students and 4 permanent employees. At present it is operating in three Schools; School of Business and Science, School of Humanities and Social Science and School of Health Science. The number of students is around 2400 and members of permanent staff around 200. In the year 1998 distance learning began, since then it has changed dramatically and now the university offers so-called flexible learning.

The main goal of this presentation is to explain what flexible learning is and the challenges the teachers face when the majority of the students are not attending the classroom. The authors will outline the development of teaching methods and technology used. One of the authors has been teaching a course in marketing called Integrating marketing communication. With the professional assistance in technology and pedagogy of Centre of teaching and learning the course was developed in order to encourage students to cooperate and get them to work evenly throughout the semester. Variety of teaching methods were used, each with a certain aim. These methods are demonstrated in the presentation and described how the students felt about working with these methods. With these new methods, the students were more active, submitted group projects were of better quality and the student presentations. It was stated in the course evaluation that students were satisfied with the teaching methods used; it helped them to steadily learn and study the curriculum.

### **Keywords:**

Flexible learning, teaching methods, active learning, integrated marketing