

EXPERIENCES IN E-LEARNING. PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS.

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The paper presents 3 years of experiences with the Virtual Learning Environment at Nicolaus Copernicus University. The authors are involved in the e-learning process as teachers of various subjects and as administrators of Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment), which is used as an e-learning platform.

The paper describes the process of preparing various types of resources and the methods of using them in education of students in intramural, extramural and postgraduate studies in the field of Information Sciences. The students and staff preferences in using various types of resources will be discussed. The special attention is paid to knowledge gained and skills trained by students and by teachers.

The effectiveness of teaching was investigated in many ways: surveys, tests, quizzes, exercises, where the knowledge gained by students should be applied to solve concrete problems, oral and written examinations. For example the surveys have been done on all groups where we were teaching various subjects. The students were asked to compare the conditions of learning with the aid of Moodle and without. The students can compare the process of learning with and without e-learning because there are still many teachers in our institute who have troubles to go through barriers of using ICT in teaching. The results of these surveys lead to the following conclusions made by students:

- they accepted Moodle immediately as additional tool supporting education,
- they postulated usage of that system in wider range of subjects,
- they noticed user-friendly interface,
- they stressed the possibility to use that system at any time and any place,
- very important for them was access to educational resources and exercises,
- they can use the descriptions of tasks realized during classes many times repeating exercises at home,
- they stressed the possibility to present to parents and friends their grades and subjects they studied recently,
- the relations between participants, especially extra-mural students, became closer then before, the communication between them is much more faster.

The obtained results of learning, before using the Moodle system and with the aid of that system, which can be compared, are shown in that paper. For example the final grades obtained by students on exams in “Managing of information in computer network systems” during last five years significantly arose: in 2007 there were 91% of very good marks whereas in 2003 there were 55%. The same tendencies were observed in the following subjects: “computer networks and their applications”, “electronic publication systems”, “virtual libraries”, and some others.

The concrete perspective of future expansion of e-learning and conditions, which should be fulfilled for that type of education in our environment, will be also presented.