

To Learn Online from Different Parts of the World: the Example of Polytechnic University Showed That This is Possible

How to switch to distance learning if students and teachers are in different parts of the world? Polytechnic University's international services found the answer. The example of one of the oldest international programs that our university implements together with the American Institute for Foreign Studies (AIFS) showed: if you really want it, then everything is possible.

It so happened that in March, American universities cancelled the internships of their students at foreign universities by the decision of the US government. At that time, working in the joint program of SPbPU and AIFS, where 10 students were studying in three groups, was suspended. An immediate transition to distance learning was a must: it was necessary to transfer the Russian language, history, political science and literature courses into a new format.



To facilitate the distance learning process, the Higher School of International Educational Programs, on the basis of which the program has been implemented, provided students with all the necessary educational materials, including textbooks

that students usually take at the library. All additional materials are sent by email or using the Google Classroom platform. Distance classes are conducted using Skype and Zoom services.

“Students are very responsible for studying in such a new for everyone format; they are always present at online lessons and complete and send homework on time. I would also like to thank our teachers for their understanding, responsible and creative approach to business, despite all the difficulties that occur. I wish you health and success!” wished the academic director of the SPbPU and AIFS network program Anna SHALYGINA.

Foreign students also did not stand aside, and shared their impressions of the past changes with us.

“Distance learning can help alleviate some stress by allowing students to move at their own pace, be able to rewind lectures, etc. My life changed in a bad way seeing as I was happy to be in Russia but then we all had to come back to the USA, and go straight into quarantine. I’m super happy we are still doing classes but I’m sad we cannot be in Russia. I think the classes, even though they are distance classes, are still just as helpful/meaningful as they would be if we were there in person. Other than that, my life is the same as it would be.

I would say that even though this really sucks right now, we will all get through this together. There is solace in knowing that all of the world is suffering through this together. Stay safe and wash your hands!” said Caitlin HOFFMAN, student.



"I think the current situation at my university is unfortunate, but the university is handling it very well. They have made the transition to online classes very easy and smooth. Advantages in distance learning include a flexible schedule, and more online resources. A flexible schedule is included, because I am able to zoom call my professors at different times during the week, email them if I need help, and do work on my own time. We have more resources online, because we are able to have access to the Internet. My life changed, because I am no longer learning the Russian language in Russia. I am learning it from the desk in my bedroom, but I am still being given the same quality education.

Distance learning works with good communication. I have video chat with my professors multiple times a week. They give me resources to use on my laptop at home and they send me assignments on google classroom.

I would like for everyone to know that even though everything is very hard right now, we will persevere. This time has given a chance to stop and reflect. It has given us a chance to spend time with our family and at home. It has allowed us to appreciate little things that we didn't before. Perhaps after this, we will come out as better people," student Laurel TOLLISON shared.

Дата публикации: 2020.04.27

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