



Taking Advantage Of The Digital Age And Expanding Your Career Opportunities

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES The digital revolution is transforming every sphere of our lives, including education.



There are lots of advantages to a blended online learning program.

Apple executive Angela Ahrendts has said, "I grew up in a physical world, and I speak English. The next generation is growing up in a digital world and they speak social."

Truer words were never spoken. The digital revolution is transforming every sphere of our lives, including education. Nowhere is that more apparent than at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

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Its Centre
for
Advanced

Management Education (CFAME) offers innovative graduate programs for working professionals hoping to advance their careers. Students aren't required to attend classes at the university campus; a bank employee in Vancouver could complete the course as easily as one of her colleagues in Toronto or Halifax.

This is because all three programs — Master of Business Administration (Financial Services) Master of Public Administration (Management) and Master of Information Management — are offered in a blended delivery format that minimizes in-classroom time and maximizes online learning.

The latest tech

The web-based programs make use of the latest digital technology, incorporating videos, webinars and other elements. In all, instructors and students use more than a dozen digital tools. Blogs, Twitter and other social media platforms play an integral role in these programs.

"We are in constant contact with our students now," says Martine Durier-Copp, Director of CFAME and a professor at the School of Public Administration at Dalhousie. "I can respond to students' questions whenever they are asked. Communication between instructors and students is not limited by time or space, and this makes for a deeper learning."

Students complete the work on their own time at a pace that suits them and, at designated times, gather for a class that is conducted online in real time.

Each program also includes a small in-person component. CFAME sends instructors to various cities to meet and teach their students who live there. So, for example, students who are based in Toronto will attend a class there one week while their Calgary-based classmates can attend the same class in their hometown the following week.

The response to this blended learning has been so positive that CFAME is adding another graduate program in the fall — Master of Business Administration (Leadership).

Blended learning programs

Martine says the centre's blended learning programs are constantly evolving and are shaped in part by research and the findings of Collaboration, E-Learning and Networks Lab (CELNET), a Dalhousie unit that researches e-learning and trains organizations in the areas of virtual collaboration, social media and communication.

"To keep up with the incredible pace of change in today's world, people have to educate themselves continually," says Durier-Copp. "Thankfully, technological advances have made it possible to get this education in a timely and convenient way."

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