

## Choose University Early Based on Expert, Lecturer, Student Opinions

Covid-19 made a comeback in Vietnam and health workers all over the country have to toil at treating the disease and steadfastly fight it, to ward off the unforeseeable consequences of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

In the face of this difficult situation, many training institutions all over the country were forced to close, such that many students will see their studies held up due to the required social distancing measures imposed by the government. To overcome this difficulty, some universities implemented online classes, where students can continue studying so as to graduate on schedule. Not just any university can offer true and effective online training of guaranteed quality, however.

According to statistics announced by the Ministry of Education and Training at the meeting the Ministry presided on April 17th there were 110 universities offering online training (and 97 that did not), with 5 of them schools with foreign investment capital, 63 public schools, and 42 nonpublic schools. Distinguishing the three categories (1) sufficient infrastructure, (2) almost sufficient, and (3) not yet sufficient, only four universities ended in the highest category with LMS and LCMS. They are:

- Hanoi Open University,
- Ho Chi Minh City Open University,
- FPT's FUNiX,
- Duy Tan University (DTU).

Closely monitoring the online training universities offer, many experts, lecturers, and students offered the following opinions:

### **Mr Ho Nguyen Quoc Hung, Deputy Director at Rikkeisoft, Danang branch:**

For a long time, parents had this idea that their children should attend a university with a solid foundation of training with traditional lecturing methods. Online learning would only be for cases living far away who are unable to travel to school for classroom classes. When the pandemic struck, however, online training could develop to its advantage. Especially as universities have invested very well in infrastructure to ensure online learning would be efficient, choosing a study environment with advanced training formats that still ensure knowledge transmission and graduation on schedule will provide students with a huge competitive advantage.



*Mr Ho Nguyen Quoc Hung, Deputy Director at Rikkeisoft, Danang branch*

Currently, with the essential trend of digitization, it is not enough for people's thinking and their way of doing business to change; a second vital element consists of the tools to realize this digitization: IT. IT provides the support for innovation of teaching and studying methods for the most efficient university

training. This is why any university that is strong in IT training and counts many IT experts will be better able to organize its training and to help each and every graduate to rapidly adapt to any field or career.

I have the following advice: students should investigate universities early and sign up for one that can provide good training for the major they desire, has a lecturing environment in touch with reality, is multilingual, has developed international collaborations, and, in particular, has the conditions for online lecturing, such that students can study in peace and graduate before the turmoil of life catches up with them.

**Dr Le Thanh Long, Vice Dean of the DTU Faculty of Information Technology**

In times when Covid-19 makes a resurgence like now, studying online is the number one solution to guarantee lecturers' and students' health while still meeting students' study and graduation targets. With this format, students can still acquire knowledge and study in group while having a chance to meet students from different parts of the country and form networking and integration skills. Before Covid-19 broke out, DTU had already been offering online training for Bachelor degrees for many years through its eUniversity programs, such that it was very well-prepared. The university invested in and put to use:

- an AMS education management system and the myDTU portal,
- the Sakai e-learning platform (open source), customized and highly adapted,
- a previously existing data center worth over three million US dollars, an investment of many years;
- previously existing and carefully compiled electronic study materials and question pools (originally localized from standard question pools from around the world).

When Covid-19 broke out in February and March 2020, DTU continued investing and upgrading its equipment, such as wide-angle cameras, AV hi-fi sound systems, projectors, and Wacoms for 150 online classrooms, and it purchased a Zoom Meetings license for about a thousand lecturers.



*Dr Le Thanh Long, Vice Dean of the DTU Faculty of Information Technology*

Studying online through the Zoom software is a very interesting experience. Online audio and video interactions are very lively. Besides real-time lecturer-student interactions through Zoom, lecturers can

still apply traditional teaching methods. The online teaching software furthermore highly increases interactivity, as lecturers can correct student exercises on the student's computer through the remote-control system and students can directly ask the lecturer questions like in the classroom. This not only helps the students discuss, understand, and remember knowledge deeply; it also creates an active and efficient learning environment. The study materials provided to the students include curriculums, textbooks, lectures, slides, exercises, and so on, created in the special format of e-learning combined with many support features to provide an interesting experience. Students can peruse the material before entering the class and absorb the material at a high level, whence they can apply and analyze the material in more depth.

Online exams are not a concern, as students can sit exams remotely under the tight surveillance of the lecturer over webcam and microphone. Online multiple-choice and open ended exams are the Board of Provosts' uniform directive. The number of questions in the exam pools was also multiplied, ensuring that exams are created free of mistakes and make a correct assessment of the students' capabilities. You can say that DTU, during the peak of Covid-19, prepared very well, from infrastructure to lecturers with high-level IT skills to high-quality online training textbooks, which made the protection of students' health and studies incredibly effective.

**Tran Hai Ngan, a 12th-grade student from Tran Phu senior high school**

I also recently looked up some information on the web and I discovered that several universities fully met the requirements of online classes of quality during the first wave.





*Tran Hai Ngan, a 12th-grade student from Tran Phu senior high school*

DTU in Danang in particular offered very efficient online classes, allowing its students to graduate early. This is why the wise decision now is to choose a major I like at a prestigious university with efficient online classes, to avoid having to interrupt my studies.

**Ha Hien Nhan, a 12th-grade student from Phan Chau Trinh senior high school**

Looking at online classes at many universities, I found not only that DTU has modern infrastructure, training programs of international quality, and professionally skilled lecturers with high IT qualifications, but also that it very efficiently implemented online teaching and studying recently, such that I didn't hesitate to apply for Tourism and Hotel Management at PSU standard at DTU.



*Ha Hien Nhan, a 12th-grade student from Phan Chau Trinh senior high school*

I also discovered that, with this major, I'll study with an advanced training program from a collaboration with Pennsylvania State University, one of the ten leading universities in the world in tourism management, so I'm really confident that I'll be able to pursue my passion of tourism.



## **Going to university in the “new normal”**

Facing the maelstrom of Covid-19, the Vietnamese people continue hoping the pandemic will come to an early end and that life can go back to normal. At this moment, creating and implementing effective online learning methods for smooth lecturing and studying will allow students to complete their studies and make a major contribution to education development. If you have your grade card in hand and if you fervently wish for university studies, DTU will be the ideal place for you, guaranteeing quality and study progress and welcoming you for this 2020–2021 academic year.

*(Media Center)*