

# NEO

BY CYPHER LEARNING

## De La Salle University-Dasmariñas

Using an LMS to make classes more engaging

## Introduction

De La Salle University - Dasmariñas (DLSU-D) is a Catholic university founded in 1911 by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The University has gained its reputation as a **premier higher education institution** in the Philippines. The institution has received many **awards and recognitions** for its research endeavors as well as environmental thrusts. It was also named Center of Development for Excellence in Information Technology and identified as an Academic Center for Excellence in Biodiversity Conservation.

Roland M. Ruben - Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator, Ernesto Ramos Jr. - Learning Object Coordinator, and two teachers share their experience with NEO LMS.

## When did you start using NEO and how was the adoption process?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** De la Salle University implemented NEO in 2010, starting with 7,000 students. From 2011 to 2019, the **adoption rate has been 100 percent**, having almost 11,000 students plus continuing education learners.

The **successful implementation of NEO** in the DLSU-D campus largely supports the activity of the university's Center for Innovative Learning Programs. The department's activity is key to **creating and engaging a community** that will efficiently teach and learn with the use of technology.

## How did NEO improve teaching?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** Teaching became more **efficient** thanks to NEO as teachers use the synchronizing feature, meaning that class changes can be pushed from parent classes to child classes so that no materials get lost. They also use class templates to save time on class creation. Instructors regularly save time on copying, stapling and distributing learning resources.

Teachers also have many tools at their disposal to make learning more engaging for their students. For example, they use gamification to make courses more fun as well as instill a spirit of **healthy competition** with the help of leaderboards.

Students and teachers **communicate and collaborate** through tools such as chat, forums, blogs, wikis. There is also a social networking feature that allows users to add others as friends.





## What kind of content are you offering through the platform?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** DLSU-D offers Higher Education and Senior High School programs, as well as continuing education. NEO provides the possibility to **organize the different levels of study** into a single network. The major advantage of this approach is that the organization management and administrators can have an overview of all activities, classes, and users.

At the same time, the overall experience is customized for each department, as the Higher Education institution is organized into seven different colleges, such as the College of Business Administration and Accountancy and the College of Education. Each college has its own custom portal, users, separate catalog, news, announcements, learning resources, and more.

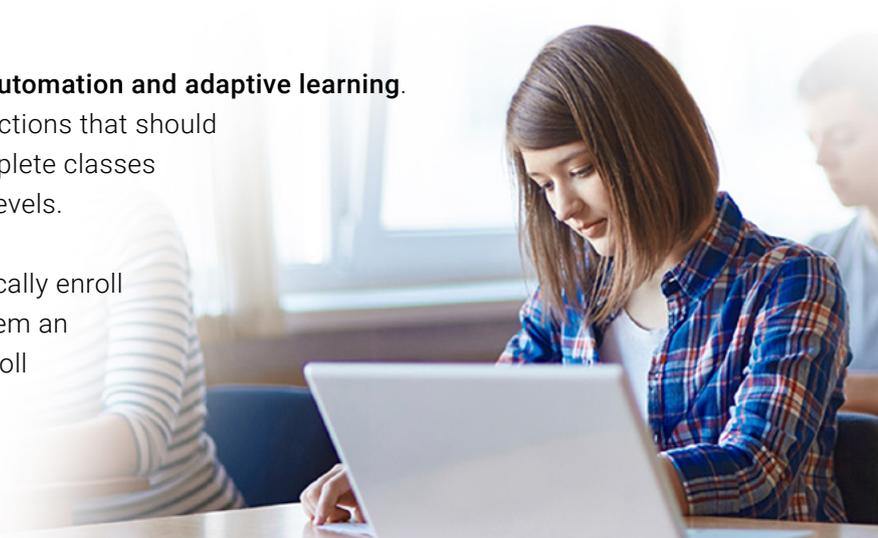
In conclusion, NEO **kept our school alive** during the pandemic. The transition from traditional to fully online delivery was made easy by the platform.

## How did you customize NEO to fit your needs?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** The Higher Education program at DLSU-D has 2,808 active courses available as of February 2019, out of which 48 percent of them are **blended learning**, 27 percent are **self-paced**, 23 percent are **instructor-led**, and one percent are **micro learning classes**.

The learning experience is also customized using **automation and adaptive learning**. The automation feature allows teachers to set up actions that should be performed when students enroll in groups, complete classes and learning paths, or fall behind on their mastery levels.

For example, DLSD-D uses automation to automatically enroll new students in an "Orientation" class that gives them an overview of the platform. They also automatically enroll new teachers in a training course.



## What improvements have you noticed since using NEO?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** NEO has helped improve learning and teaching by offering an easy way to **make lessons more engaging**, implement blended learning, and more **online programs** for both local and international learners.

DLSU-D has also been able to **reduce costs**, especially with printed items. The university has a strong paperless advocacy program that aims to teach students to be more conservative with their paper use. Yearly, the institution saves around \$12,600 on printing the class Syllabus for all students.

## What do you like most about NEO?

**Ernesto Ramos Jr. - Learning Object Coordinator:** Students love the freedom of studying at any time and they find NEO fun and engaging.

**Maurice Olivier Baylan - Teacher:** NEO is the best platform for me because it's an **all-in-one package**. It's also easy to use for both teachers and students.

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** NEO is easy to use and has a **very engaging user interface**. We can gamify our online classes with the use of points, badges, and the leaderboard. NEO has kept our students engaged and motivated. Parents just love the fact that they can **monitor their children's lessons**, assessments, and overall performance.

**Ace Monitor, Teacher:** Aside from the fact that we are pioneering NEO usage, it is more **convenient to use** than any other LMS that I have experienced.

## What would you say is the main benefit of using NEO from your student's perspective?

**Maurice Olivier Baylan - Teacher:** DLSU-D students have **access to class information** anytime, anywhere and easily keep track of their schedule. This makes them more self-directed learners and more involved in academic activities even when they are not at school.

Students also agree that the LMS helps them develop their **critical thinking skills** (65.3 percent of high school and 59 percent of college students have rated it as a 4 or higher). As an addition to face-to-face instruction.

The LMS helps them **better communicate** with their peers when they are not at school and also **collaborate on assignments**. NEO has debate assignments in which students can take a pro or against stance, and they can be assessed for their critical analysis during a debate.



## Which features are the most helpful for you and why?

**Maurice Olivier Baylan - Teacher:** Teachers use **gamification** to make classes more engaging and reward students with points and badges for completing actions, such as taking a quiz or completing a new lesson. This motivates them to not only complete their assignments but actually engage more in using the platform.

The project enables instructors to be more efficient by **saving time on tasks** such as grading papers, creating classes and giving personalized feedback to students.

## How have you encouraged teachers to use NEO for their classes?

**Roland M. Ruben, Virtual Learning Environment Coordinator:** To support our teachers, we give **face-to-face training** and **online training** for individuals and groups. We also offer support through phone or email.

We encourage our teachers by sharing with them best practices. We have e-learning forums, a radio show to inform them about what's new in e-learning, and we always assure them that they have our support.

