



DALARNA
UNIVERSITY

DALARNA UNIVERSITY
– A UNIVERSITY FOR
NEXT GENERATION LEARNING



DALARNA UNIVERSITY – AN EVER-CHANGING UNIVERSITY

In 1977, Dalarna University was founded under the name Högskolan i Falun/Borlänge; however, the tradition of post-secondary education in this part of the county of Dalarna began long before then. In 1819, Fahlbergsskolan – the first college of civil engineering in Sweden – opened its doors, followed in 1875 by the teacher education college. Some years later, in 1894, the nursing programme was established.

In the 1950s, a technical secondary school was established in Borlänge, the only one of its kind in Dalarna. By then, Borlänge already had a great deal of experience offering engineering and technical education at various levels. In 1975, the first applied technology university programmes began, which came to be a part of Högskolan i Falun/Borlänge in the same year that the university was founded. Twenty years later, in 1995, the institute was renamed Högskolan Dalarna, a name that better describes its integral place in Dalarna.

Dalarna University comprises two campuses: Campus Falun (the administrative campus) and Campus Borlänge. Alongside its campus courses, the university offers many web-based distance courses that continue to grow in popularity.

As a result of continuous growth, the university can rightfully maintain its position in both size and quality alongside those other universities in Sweden that have been established over the last 50 years. In 2010, it had more than 18 000 registered students (the equivalent of about 7 250 full-time students). Of these 18 000, 65 percent were registered in web-based distance courses. With its openness to new ideas, pedagogical development, and new technology, along with the close collaboration it maintains with all regional sectors, Dalarna University successfully attracts students from all over the world.

OPEN ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

For today's students, electronic communication is part of the everyday. It is one specific form of such communication, namely the Internet, that has led to completely new opportunities for learning.

Next Generation Learning (NGL) is about the development of pedagogy that uses the Internet and other technology, while placing the student in a central role. Students have close contact with their teachers, and this fact alone has helped build this growing university's reputation as a leader in this area. Distance is no longer a factor: web-based learning is about dialogue and interaction – both student to student, and student to teacher. This is achieved using the Internet in real time. The learning platforms and chat features allow students to feel that they are present in the same way as they would be in a classroom, making geography insignificant. In the virtual meeting place, students are just as involved as they would be in a lecture hall. With a web camera, microphone, and chat site, everybody can benefit from technology for educational purposes. NGL, which is about finding new ways of imparting knowledge, is being developed both on campus and on the Internet, and it is the vision of Dalarna University to be at the forefront in this important area well into the future.

When it comes to web-based distance learning, there are a number of factors that explain why Dalarna University has been so

successful. Certainly, it was not the first to offer distance education. What it did do, however, was to invest in distance education that is web-based. In early 2010, it became the first institute of higher education in Sweden to appear on iTunes U, providing students from all corners of the globe access both to lectures as well as to examples of courses and programmes. Within weeks, language courses at Dalarna University had become some of the most downloaded from the iTunes U website.

Another factor to explain the university's success is its early recruitment of expert educators in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). It is their use of technological advancements that has led to new means of communicating and informing.

Supporting the development of NGL are decision-makers from the regional private and public sectors. They see NGL as an investment in the future and as such give it their full backing. It is a case of linking education, development, research, and information to the real world, which in turn promotes student learning and progress, while making knowledge-acquisition accessible to all.



The basic principles that support the development of NGL:

- There shall be close contact – student to student, and student to teacher.
- Pedagogy shall determine the technology, not vice versa.
- It is the needs of the student, not the technology, that shall determine the development of courses and programmes.
- Technical solutions shall be as simple as possible.
- Learning and development shall be promoted together with interested parties outside the university.
- Practical experience shall be tied to research, which in turn shall serve to further development.



EDUCATION THAT MEETS THE DEMANDS OF THE REAL WORLD

Dalarna University offers one of Sweden's best teacher education programmes. Its media programmes are well-known as a result of direct external contacts. And interest in its Sport Management Programme is at a national level.

Currently, Dalarna University offers over 1 200 courses, 40 first-cycle programmes, and 15 second-cycle programmes. The choice of subject is varied: Computer Science and IT; Economics, Social Studies and Tourism; Sport and Health; Culture, Media and Design; Languages; Technology and Science; Education; and Health Care and Social Work. The subjects Technology, Tourism, and Economics are taught in Borlänge, the other subjects in Falun. The Mediehuset in Falun is one of Sweden's most modern and well-equipped teaching facilities for media studies, while in Borlänge, students have access to a materials laboratory, one of the most modern in Sweden.

Dalarna University has three main vocational programmes: Teaching, Nursing, and Engineering. Most students are registered in the humanities, 25 percent of all courses being language courses, making Dalarna University unique among other institutes of higher education in Sweden in this regard.

Those who study at Dalarna University are well-prepared for the job market. According to a study undertaken by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, students from Dalarna University have been more successful finding employment than students from most other institutes of higher education in Sweden. One reason for this success is the fact that many programmes and courses have been developed in direct consultation with the regional private and public sectors. Furthermore, student networking with businesses and organisations comprises a natural and successful element of students' education.

In terms of web-based distance learning, Dalarna University is one of Sweden's leading institutes of higher education. It is the subject groups themselves that are responsible for developing their own web-based courses. Providing them with technical support is the ICT-Pedagogical Centre, which is also responsible for developing pedagogical competence in this area.



Main goals for Dalarna University:

- The university shall
- offer high-quality courses and programmes
- be a leader in Next Generation Learning
- further integrate internationalisation into all forms of education
- offer PhD courses in key areas
- further develop external coproduction in the areas of education, research, and organisation/business development
- offer an attractive and creative work environment for teachers and students alike
- optimise use of accessible resources
- maintain high quality in its provision of scholarly and scientific information services



RESEARCH: BENEFITTING DALARNA

When Dalarna University develops its programmes and courses, it does so with the workplace in mind. In keeping with this, research serves to bridge the gap between knowledge and practical application. Research in systematic forms has been in place at the university since the mid-1980's and is an important means to maintaining and developing quality education.

Currently, there are some 30 professors, a number of visiting professors, and 140 senior lecturers with research degrees working alongside other researchers and teachers at the university. There are also 65 doctoral students studying towards their research degrees. The total number of teaching staff is 485. Many are researchers in the following six prioritised fields as a result of the new research strategy for 2012-2015:

Complex Systems – Microdata Analysis: methods and techniques for collecting, analysing, structuring, and using data in relation to social informational infrastructures.

Culture, Identity and Representation: communication and representation in various media that discuss, for example, issues of culture and conflict of values.

Education and Learning: research into the various perspectives of the pre-school, primary school, and secondary school in collaboration with regional schools and in close relation to teacher education.

Energy Transition and Societal Processes: energy technology with a focus on energy supply based on renewable energy resources and adaptable heating systems.

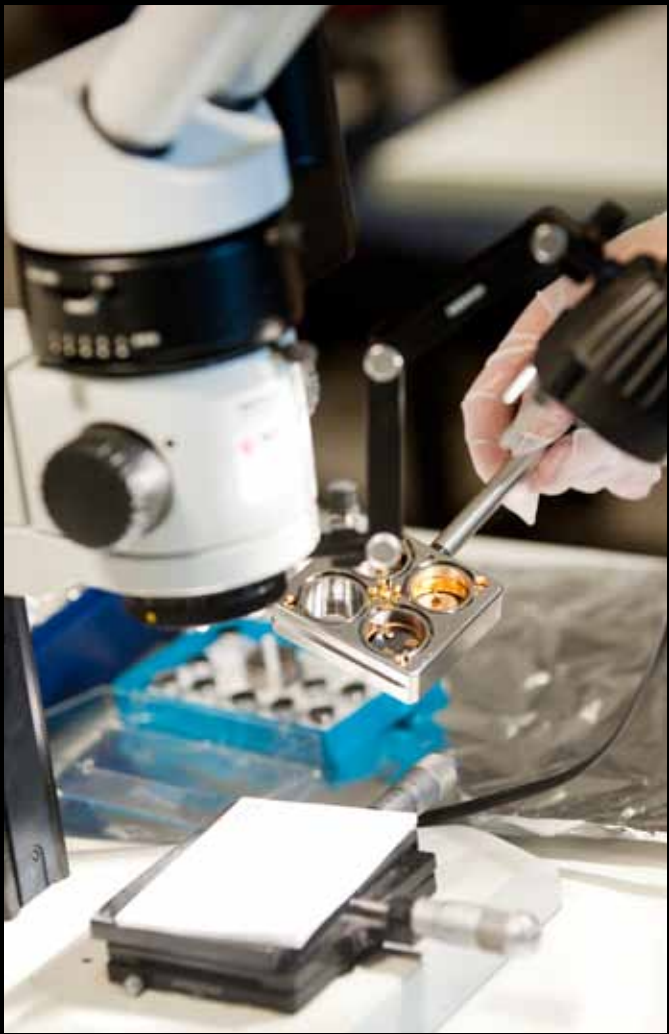
Health and Social Welfare: care focussing on, for example, people's health problems and the way in which clinical decisions can be made based on the experiences of the patient and caregiver.

Steel Forming and Surface Engineering: industrially adapted material science with specialisation in, for example, metal working, and metal forming and surface technology.

Further, the research strategy for 2012-2015 involves a significant investment in Next Generation Learning (NGL). This investment concerns the various research and education environments at the university and is not its own specific research area.

The university's goal-directed efforts to build up research will lead to the university being able to establish its own research degree awarding powers in a few selected fields.

These six fields of research listed above involve researchers from many different subjects and institutes of higher education both in Sweden as well as in other countries. Dalarna University is mainly engaged in applied research: the starting point being a challenge or a phenomenon in the world for which new knowledge is required before a solution can be found. Dalarna University's well-developed network within the private and public sectors offers excellent support for this type of research. As a result, research at Dalarna University is often directly related to regional needs and as such is of great value to Dalarna and the people who live there.



DALARNA'S PLACE IN THE WORLD

We live in a global reality, and although Dalarna has much to offer in its own right, still the exchange of experiences with the rest of the world is essential.

Dalarna University has many researchers and teachers from other parts of the world as well as an impressive global network that is accessible to students and personnel alike. Collaboration with a number of other institutes of higher education, both national and international, is of clear importance. Currently, there are more than 180 agreements with universities and colleges outside Sweden. As well, Dalarna University collaborates in a number of student and teacher exchange programmes. It is such opportunities that help the university maintain an important exchange of international ideas.

Featuring in this international exchange are the many students from other parts of the world who choose Dalarna University as their place of study. Most of them are from other European countries and come as part of an Erasmus exchange to study at the master's level.

Dalarna University plays an important role in increasing the understanding of and commitment to today's global issues and challenges. At all levels of teaching and research, a global perspective is consequently encouraged. Indeed, most programmes are designed to include a level of international content.

- Approximately 400 campus students study at Dalarna University every year as part of bilateral agreements.
- Web-based distance learning, partner universities, international guest speakers, programmes taught in English, and courses in 11 foreign languages open doors at an international level.

THE BENEFITS OF REGIONAL COLLABORATION

A quality analysis conducted by The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Svenskt näringsliv) ranked Dalarna University at the top two years in a row in its collaboration with the business community in a number of programmes and courses.

Because programmes and courses are continuously being adapted to meet the needs of the workplace, our graduates are well-prepared for the working world. A natural element of their education is the chance to make contacts in their chosen industry or profession. At the same time, students build networks by means of degree projects, mentor programmes, project work, practicums, and study visits. It is such networks that serve them well as they set out in their chosen careers.

Work with all sectors of society is essential for Dalarna University, which has a long tradition of collaboration in the areas of education and research. Courses and programmes often have a connection with business and industry and other social sectors at all levels: regional, national, and international.

Dalacampus is the organisation at the university that works in the area of collaboration with regional governments, county councils, and business and industry. It comprises the following:

Dalacampus näringsliv: collaboration with the regional business community in the areas of competence development, education, continuing education, and research and development; it finds and creates opportunities for students and businesses to work together; listens to the needs of business and industry, and transforms problems into stimulating projects for students.

PUD – Pedagogiskt utvecklingscentrum Dalarna (Dalarna Centre for Educational Development): collaboration with schools; a large network with other institutes of higher education and regional centres of education has been established as a result of many years of work in this area.

SUD – Socialtjänstens utvecklingscentrum Dalarna (Dalarna Centre for Social Services Development): collaboration with social welfare organisations; creation of projects that relate to undergraduate courses, professional development, and organisational development.

Dalacampus uppdrag: provides customised commissioned education opportunities for the private and public sectors.

Dalarna University also collaborates closely with Dalarna's County Council (Landstinget). Other public administrative offices, organisations, and companies that work within the field of health care are also involved in collaborative work.

Dala Sports Academy forms a part of EAS (The European Athlete as Student). EAS is a European network that aims to improve opportunities for elite athletes within Europe to find appropriate forms of education after they retire from athletics.

An important feature of collaborative work is involvement in social development and procurement of funding for the university's schools and research groups. A particularly successful example of this is the graduate school in metal working that Dalarna University runs together with representatives from the steel industry.



ORGANISATION

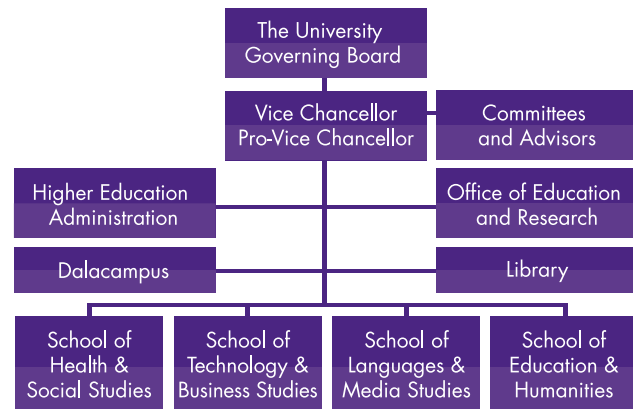
The Swedish Government designates a board and a vice chancellor to head the university. The Vice Chancellor at Dalarna University is Marita Hilliges. The Chairman of the University Governing Board is Peter Samuelsson, Senior Vice President R&D, Outokumpu Group.

Dalarna University is organised into schools, and in 2010 a decision was made to strengthen the university's teacher education by establishing a new school; therefore, there are now four schools at Dalarna University: Health and Social Studies; Technology and Business Studies; Languages and Media Studies; and the new Education and Humanities.

The University Faculty Board serves an important function at the university, its responsibility being that of controlling and maintaining the quality and development of education and research. Assisting the board in its work are five field-specific boards.



Organisational Structure





DALARNA'S STUDENT UNION: MEETING STUDENT NEEDS

Life as a student can be rewarding and enjoyable. It's a time for personal development, for gaining knowledge, and for making new friends and contacts that may just last a lifetime.

Dalarna University's Student Union (Dalarnas studentkår) is in place to serve the needs of the students and has two main responsibilities: first, to monitor all courses and programmes in consultation with Dalarna University as a means to ensuring high quality; second, to organise social events and activities. The student union also ensures that student accommodation meets certain standards, and that students have a good safety net and study environment. The union also lets students know about such events as Introduction Days, pub evenings, and concerts.

When it comes to communication, the student union is well-accustomed to using technology. This is apparent in many ways, such as in its use of various social media.

"We keep ourselves updated on the web and inform our students about what is going on," states its chairperson. "Dalarna's student union has one of Sweden's largest Facebook pages and currently has about 1500 members. We are working to create a digital meeting place within the framework for Dalarna University. We want to encourage online social meetings alongside studies for those thousands of students at Dalarna University who study by distance."

Students can meet in the two student union buildings: in Borlänge, there is the Studenternas hus Tenoren just a stone's throw from campus. (Tenoren refers to the famous Borlänge-born opera singer Jussi Björling.) In Falun, there is the Studenternas hus Kåre, located in the town centre. (Its name refers to the goat that is said to have found the first copper at what was to become the local mine.) Both union buildings now serve as places for students to meet and hold events. The union is also involved with a number of clubs, associations, and activities.

The key to the success of the student union results from its close collaboration with business and industry, the local authorities, Dalarna University, and the students themselves.

URBAN DALARNA: EXPERIENCE AND RENEWAL

Dalarna County holds a special place in Sweden. Known as the cradle of Swedish culture, it is seen by many as Sweden just in miniature. Here you are surrounded by countryside – mountains, forests, lakes, hills, fields. Many who live in the county carefully preserve and respect tradition yet challenge it at the same time. And it's a fact that many of Sweden's most successful artists, designers, musicians, fashion designers, and handcrafters originate from this part of the country.

It is such Swedish traditions as the Dala Horse, folk costumes, folk music, and Kurbits (a special design) that people directly associate with Dalarna. From these old and cherished traditions, forms of expression and ideas develop that are new and exciting.

The towns of Falun and Borlänge, home to the two campuses, each has its own distinct story to tell. Today, however, issues such as the environment, health, sport, development, and business are important to both.

Home to a population of 56 000, Falun is Dalarna's regional centre with the region's main hospital, the county administrative board, the county museum, and other such key institutions being based here. Established in 1641 by Queen Kristina, Falun has years of history and was once Sweden's second most important town. There is a pleasant downtown area with cafés and restaurants; there is a rich cultural life; and there are many opportunities for sporting activities at the sport and outdoor facility Lugnet located in walking distance from Campus Falun.

Borlänge, with a population of 49 000, is a comparatively new town, having been given town status in 1944. Large corporations and organisations, such as SSAB, Stora Kvarnsveden's Papermill, and the Swedish Transport Administration, are located here. Borlänge quite rightly calls itself Dalarna's commercial centre and is home to the indoor dome-shaped shopping centre Kupolen. The town has an active music scene and every summer hosts the popular festival Peace & Love that attracts many internationally known musicians.

Falun and Borlänge complement each other in their choice of leisure time and cultural activities. The distance between the two towns is only 20 kilometres (about 25 minutes), with regular train and bus services connecting the two. Naturally, students receive a traveller's discount. Lake Runn also connects the two towns. In the winter, it attracts long-distance ice-skaters and in the summer is perfect for lazy days of swimming and fishing.

Together, Borlänge and Falun offer a wonderful place for students to spend their study years, while the well-developed collaboration between Dalarna University and the regional public and private sectors provides many employment opportunities. This, along with the fact so many students agree that Dalarna is a great county to live in, is why many choose to remain and settle in this, the heart of Sweden, long after graduation.



TEXT: Agneta Barle, Mandy Bengts, and Anna Hägglund
TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH: Mandy Bengts LAYOUT: Lisa Westlund
PHOTO: Ulf Palm, Anna Hägglund, Jonathan Bergkvist, Kristoffer Skog,
Eva Lena Karlsson, and stock xchg

du.se

CONTACT INFORMATION

Högskolan Dalarna

791 88 Falun

Sweden

Phone: +46 23 77 80 00

www.du.se