Implementation of
Introduction to R for Social Scientists
as a Preparatory Course in IPSDS
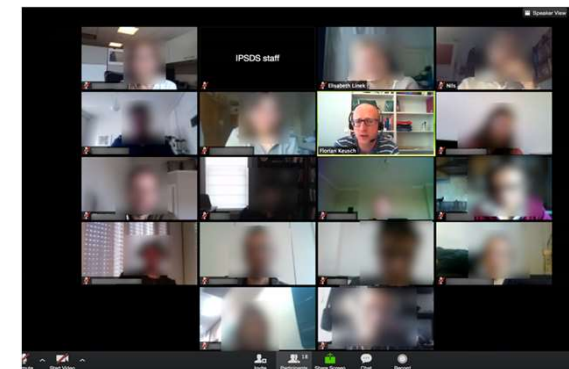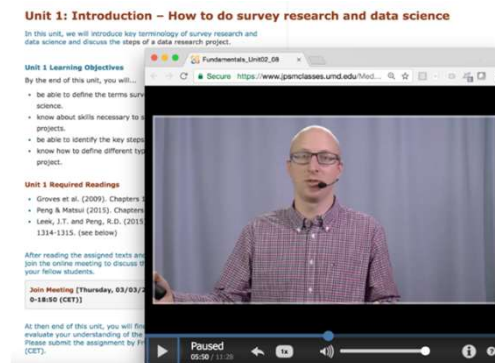
Florian Keusch

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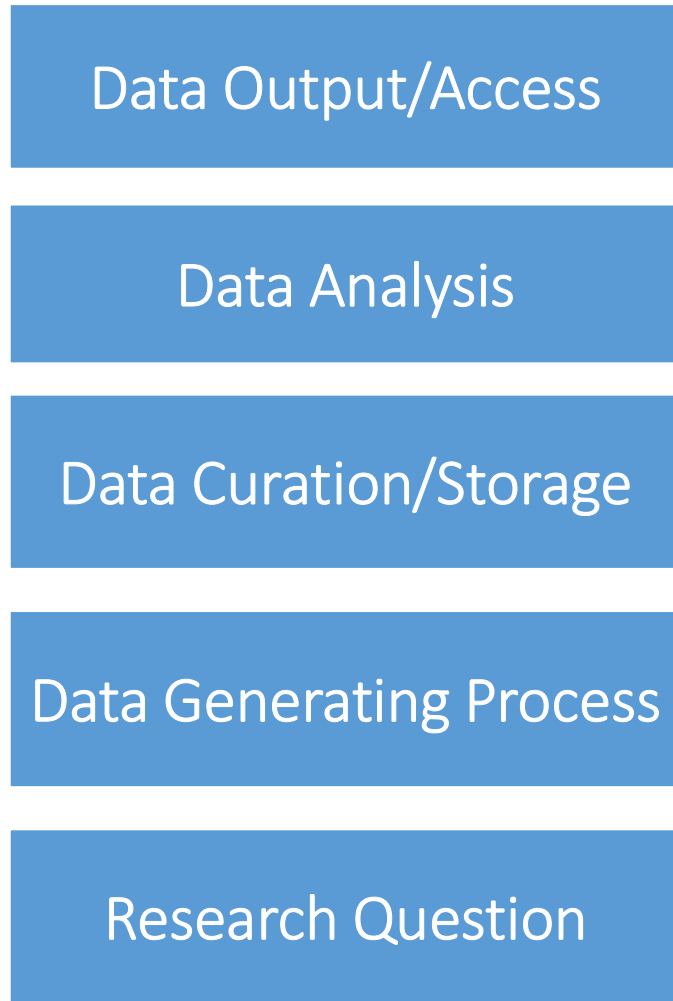International Program in Survey and Data Science

International Program in Survey and Data Science (IPSDS)

- Started in 2016 as collaboration between University of Mannheim and University of Maryland
  - Funded by German Federal Ministry of Education and Research

- International faculty from academia and industry

- Currently 58 students in 4 cohorst
  - 21 countries (5 continents) of residence; median age = 31; 100% working professionals

- Fully taught online
  - Asynchronous
  - Synchronous

Learning objectives / Modules

Data Output/Access	Learn how to communicate results and distribute and store your data
Data Analysis	Learn a variety of analysis methods suited for different data types
Data Curation/Storage	Learn how to curate and manage data
Data Generating Process	Understand how to collect data yourself, and how data are generated through administrative and other processes.
Research Question	Learn how to formulate your research goal and which data are best suited to achieve it.

Source: Usher in Japec et al 2015

IPSDS
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM
IN SURVEY & DATA SCIENCE

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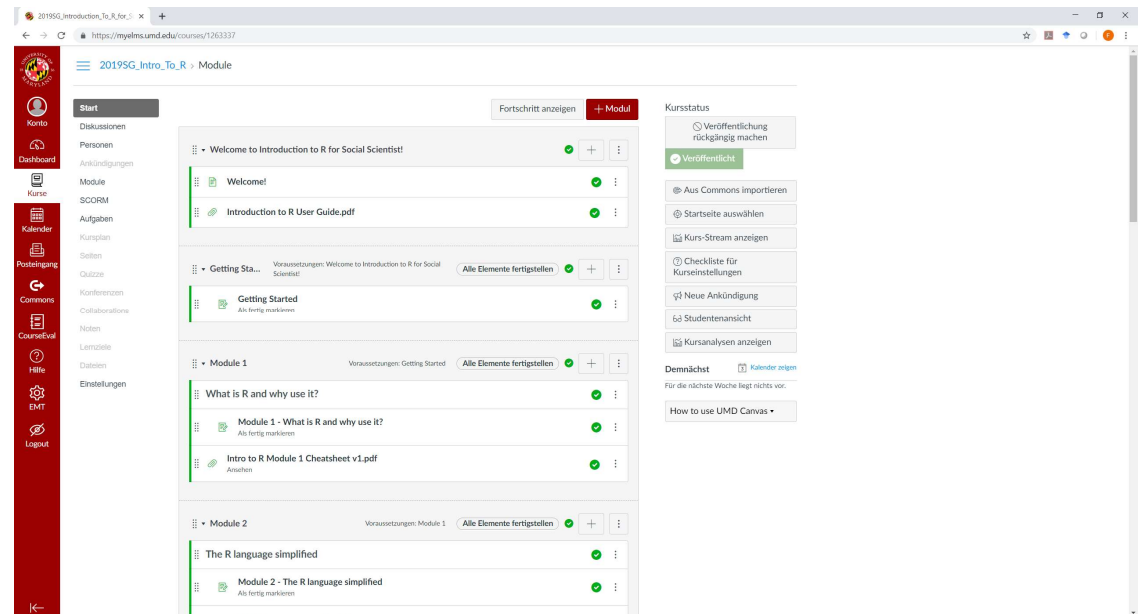
Admission requirements

- Academic degree (min. Bachelor's degree)
- At least 12 ECTS in mathematical/applied statistics
- At least one year of work experience in a position working with data
- English proficiency

Need for Intro to R Course

- R used in many IPSDS courses, but no intro course taught in the program
- Assumption so far was that students would either know it already or catch up on their own using other sources (e.g., free online tutorials, DataCamp, etc.)

Technical Implementation

- Course implemented on Canvas by IT assistant

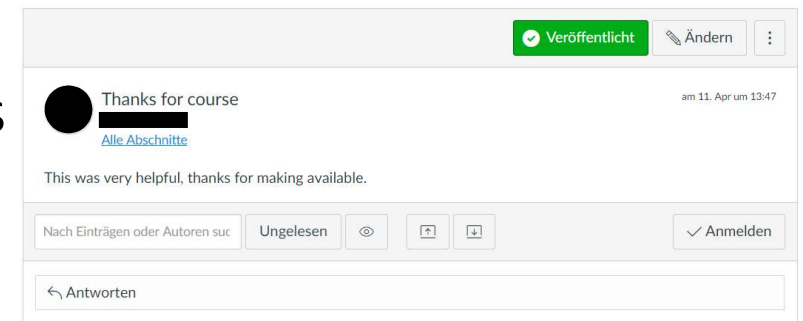- Documentation was very helpful

- No technical issues

Course Goals and Implementation into existing IPSDS Program

- Course intende to help students who had no prior experience with ®

- Participation was voluntary and completely self-paced
  - Only minimal oversight by instructors and IT assistant

- All existing and incoming IPSDS students invited to take course

- 23 students enrolled
  - 15 finished entire course – will receive certificate
  - 2 finished (almost) all modules but did not do Final Project
  - 6 just started but did not do more than one module

What was the Experience?

- Overall, very positive feedback from students
  - Both in evaluations and on Canvas

- True impact of course will be determined based on students success in other courses where students without R experience struggeled in the past
  - e.g., Introduction to Real World Data Management
- If experience is positive, we will consider this as a long term solution for incoming students

Thank You!

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International Program in Survey and Data Science

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🌐 https://survey-data-science.net/