

Supercourse Newsletter
26 July 07

www.pitt.edu/~super1/
www.bibalex.org/SuperCourse/Index.htm
www.bibalex.org/english/initiatives/SupercourseArchive.htm

Dear Sensei,

Legacy

In the past few weeks two of the giants of epidemiology, died. Ralph Paffenbarger's research helped start the exercise boom, and George Comstock was one of the major forces in the prevention of TB in the US and world. Sadly, neither left a legacy lecture for future generations of students. We hope that you as one of global leaders of science might consider "saving a lecture" for the students of your students, and the students of the world. Sadly we were not able to obtain a lecture from these two Giants. It would have been wonderful for my students to learn the natural history of exercise epidemiology from its father. What will your legacy be for the students and faculty who come after you. Perhaps the greatest gift to future generation is your knowledge. Assistant professors and all educators should "stand on the shoulders of giants", you.

Please consider your legacy.

Improving the Training of the World

Over the past few weeks we have been taking stock of where we are. There is little question that we are serving as a transforming agent for higher education, and it is very exciting. We have shown how to e-recruit globally from 174 countries. We have collected over 3300 lectures, and we have established the first multinational system for sharing curricula. Not bad!!

A basic problem is crossing the digital divide. The backbone of our work is the Internet. However in developing countries such as India, less than 5% of the population have access to the Internet. How do we improve teaching say in the rural areas of India, Pakistan and China? We have thus have the network the lectures and the Internet, but it is not enough.

We need to deliver the lectures to the schools across the digital divide, and the teachers have to have the means to present these to the students.

Last year we thought of a simple approach (that did not work). This was where say a teacher in rural Pakistan would call Lahore, and type in say "67" and the lecture "the epidemiology of Type 1 diabetes" would drop into the cell phone. Then one would go off line and a yellow plugged video would connect into a TV for presentation. The concept

was good, but it did not work as there is so much variability across telephone, also in Pakistan less than ½ of the schools had TVs...back to the drawing board.

We have a new idea, and would appreciate your comments. Suppose say 1000 lectures could be put onto a DVD. In addition free books would be put on the DVD from Google books. The problem then is getting the DVDs to the schools, why couldn't the Post Office deliver these? The cost for the DVDs would be less than a dollar each, and delivery would be very inexpensive. This is similar to a model used in the US called NetFlix. Why couldn't a DVD player with a screen be made available a shared among several schools. A cheap one may be only \$50.00. For the schools that had electricity and a TV, the lectures could be played through TVs. For those with no electricity, the DVD could be battery operated. If the class was small enough the lecture could be presented on the .25 meter screen. If it were a large screen the teacher could use the materials from the lectures and present this on a chalk board. The educators would have over a 1000 lectures to chose from. In addition, every year the DVD could be recycled with new materials.

Using this method, we use the power of what we are created, but move beyond the Internet to bring the best possible materials to students, even where there is no electricity. We are convinced that to improve global education it has to be a multiple channel approach from high speed internet, to low speed mules carrying DVDs.

Please let us know if something like this could be used in the schools in your country. Please write to ronlaporte@aol.com

Lecture of the week

In the past several years, Supercourse experienced tremendous growth with lectures coming in from different fields of public health and medicine. Interestingly, the first few lectures posted in the Supercourse in 1996-1997 concentrated on the themes of Epidemiology research methods and Diabetes Epidemiology. Today, we are proud to present to you several more lectures in the field of Epidemiology Research methods, given to the Supercourse by Jan Dorman, one of the very first authors contributing to the Supercourse. We are really looking forward to your feedback.

www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec30101/index.htm	Part	I
www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec30111/index.htm	Part II with Absolute, Relative and	
Attributable	Risks	presentation
www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec30121/index.htm	Gene-Environment Interactions	

Please consider providing a lecture

Ron, Eugene, Mita, Faina, Nicolas, Francois, Paff, Abed, Soni, Ala, Rania, Arlene, Fayrouz

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Main

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