

WHY DO STUDENTS STILL BOTHER TO COME TO LECTURES WHEN EVERYTHING IS ONLINE?

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ABSTRACT

With the recent emergence of an extensive range of online resources: everything from electronic lecture notes, slides, mp3 podcasts to the fully-downloadable recorded lecture with coordinated audio and visual images, the obvious question is: "Why do students still bother to come to lectures?"

To explore this question, a preliminary survey was carried out within junior, intermediate and senior courses taught by School of Molecular Bioscience, The University of Sydney during second semester, 2009. This simple voluntary survey, which was mounted on WebCT, had two simple questions, each of which allowed both constrained and open responses.

Do you attend lectures?

How would you feel if there were no face-to-face lectures and lectures were only available online?

Of those students who responded to the survey, the overwhelming majority, surprisingly, attended most lectures. For a voluntary on-line survey which was only accessible over a two-week period, the response rate was very encouraging. Most respondents also submitted abundant, enthusiastic free-form comments. The students were keen to give their opinion; many of the comments contained more than one reason for their attendance pattern. Because of this, the results (both numerical data and comments) provide a rich resource of student opinion for analysis.

This conference provides the ideal opportunity to reflect on our data with assistance from a wider audience.

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