

Supercourse Newsletter
18 June 2010
www.pitt.edu/~super1/

Dear Friends,

Adapt an adorable lecture

Eugene Garfield, the father of citation analysis is giving us \$5,000 from his organization. We thank him very much. This most certainly helps our meager budget and moves us forward for a few more months. You too can contribute to the Supercourse by “adapting a lecture” for a small amount of money each month you adapt an orphan lecture from India, Buffalo, or Peru. All of our lectures are warm, brilliant, and cuddly (sort of like Ella). Please feel free to examine and play with our lectures at www.pitt.edu/~super1/. You can contribute right through this page. You can even take one of my lectures home, and use it to teach and play with your children. What you pay for an X box, or I-Phone, you might consider supporting our orphan lectures that definitely need a home.

Library of Alexandria Supercourse and the Future

When I am asked to teach an hour talk on something I am not familiar, it takes me about 12-15 hours to prepare a lecture, and it typically is not very good. In the next few months the Library of Alexandria Supercourse will be up and running with the potential having millions of PowerPoint lectures. What will this mean for higher education? One major aspect is that the preparation times for teaching will be reduced by potentially 80%, thus instead of ~20 hours that many of us use for preparation, it might be only 4 hours but with much better lectures. We thus reduce markedly the burden to produce high class lectures. What will we do with our extra time? I would value your thoughts as to the future impact on higher education of the BA supercourse of science. It “takes my breath away” to think how we might help transform education.

In the end, it's not going to matter how many breaths you took, but how many moments took your breath away. (shing xiong)

Call for lectures: Friends, it is nearly July, many of you are getting bored. You have watched as many re-runs of Desperate Housewives as you can. The Buzz of the World cup is in the air, but will soon end. Your children are at home, and driving you nuts. What can you do to break out of the summer doldrums? Welllll, you can send a Supercourse lecture to us. There are many areas still not explored in the Supercourse, and your lecture would fill the gap. Eugene Shubnikov is now sitting at an Internet café at the Crimeria waiting for your lecture. Tell your friends that we are nearing harvest time for lectures, and would like to gather a whole bunch of new, modern, lectures, that are ripe for intellectual plucking. If you want your students and children to learn from the best, then we need you to contribute lectures to share with the best. Please send these to Super1@pitt.edu.

Indigenous Health: A small group of us, lead by Shu-yu from Taiwan, Yang Ze, Grace Egeland, Dean Seneca, and Eugene Shubnikov are interesting in building a Supercourse for indigenous

populations. The reality is that minority populations world wide often have similar health problems, Obesity, Diabetes, Smoking etc. We think by gather lectures on the health and risk factors of the Roma in Hungary, Aborigines in Australia, Inuit in Canada, native tribes in Peru, etc. that we can learn from each other as to how best improve the health of minority populations. If you are interested in joining, please drop me a note at ronaldlaporte@gmail.com.

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great (Mark Twain)

Fishing: It is very exciting as we are just about done fishing for deans. Marwa Abdelrassoul and her team of "Agra-fishers" at the Library of Alexandria will complete the deans of the Agricultural schools by the end of June. We will have over 2500 deans, and Ministers of Health representing well over 3 million faculty, students and MOH staff. We would appreciate any advice that you might have as now that we have caught the dean fish, we need start to feed them WHO, Library of Alexandria and Supercourse knowledge about global health and non-communicable diseases. We plan to revamp the two lectures that Faina developed on Prevention and Global Health and ask all teachers and students to present at least one slide from the lectures next year. To paraphrase the classic Chinese quote:

Give a dean a video lecture, and you will teach his class of 25. Educate a dean to use Supercourse lectures, and you will teach 100s of faculty and students (Ron Ze)

Bears: Jan, Ella and I live in a suburban part of Pittsburgh, about 15 km away. We heard on the news that a Black Bear was seen about km from our house. This is truly amazing. Ella weighs 3 kilos, she would be a tasty little morsel for a bear. It is really rather cool. First turkeys, then deer, and now Smoky the bear.

Lecture of the week

Supercourse houses many lectures in many public health areas, but today we want to go back to the basics and highlight a very important lecture that answers a very basic question "What is Public Health" This lecture was created by Dr. Jesse Huang from China and can be accessed at <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec37921/index.htm>

In addition to various accomplishments in the field of public health and epidemiology, Dr. Huang created a Chinese Supercourse project where he mobilized a large number of medical students in China to translate the Supercourse into Chinese language. This lecture may be especially valuable to the newer members of our network, who are still struggling with an easy, but yet so complicated question of what is public health.

Best Regards

Ron, Ella, Faina, Eugene, Francois, Meredith, Raj, Eric, Ismail, Vint, Gil, Nicholas, Ali, Jesse, Kawkab, Najeeb