

Supercourse Newsletter

July 24, 2010

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www.bibalex.org/SuperCourse/Index.htm

www.bibalex.org/english/initiatives/SupercourseArchive.htm

Dear Friends,

Please forward to your friends interested in global health and Michael Jackson.

Global Summit for Citizen Diplomacy

We have received wonderful news. In November there will be a major Summit on Citizen Diplomacy. Citizen Diplomacy is the new buzz in both Washington and in many other areas. It is a concept where citizens in the world reach out to each other. The Supercourse was identified as one of the top 10 Health and Education projects. We will have the opportunity to present the work of the Supercourse to top level government officials, and more importantly potential donors. This is our prize, not mine, not Pittsburgh's, not the Library of Alexandria. It has been the effort of over 3000 authors, and 46,000 faculty. I wanted to personally thank each of you. This prize could bring considerable attention to the Supercourse and the Supercourse of Science. I am an epidemiologist, not a diplomat, but I feel that the Supercourse has been successful in bringing our global faculty together. We could have never developed wonderful friendships with those in Egypt, Iran, Argentina, Cuba, UK, Israel, Russia, and 160 other countries without all our efforts. It is impossible to hate people who want to prevent disease in your children. We have a very neat form of diplomacy and friendship where University Faculty share their knowledge with each other. Also, it is nice that we have a 2 way street of diplomacy where I in the US share my knowledge with Somalia, but also Arin Basu from India has the top rated lecture in the Supercourse. I wanted to thank all of you, we have constructed a model of health and harmony for the world.

Life always gets harder toward the summit – the cold increases, the responsibility increases. Nietzsche

Fishing and now catching Deans. We have sent out 500 letters from Dr. Shorbaji from WHO, Dr. Serageldin and I from the 2000 deans we fished. In the letters we ask the deans to distribute this letter to their faculty. Let us know if you receive it. It appears that the deans are distributing the letter, which is fantastic. If we are successful we will make the Supercourse known to all the faculty in the Medical and Public health schools. Then we will do the same for the Agriculture students, heads of Medical and Public Health Societies, and Ministers of Health. In the next few weeks we will also send to you the announcement and ask you to distribute this in your faculty in your school or others in your organization..

In 2-3 months we will distribute an updated version of Faina Linkov's excellent Global Health lecture to you (<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec29991/index.htm>) and all the medical schools. Faina gathered slides from many of your lectures, and combined them into a lecture

about global health. We will distribute the lecture to the deans and ask all faculty world wide to present at least 1 slide of this lecture in their class. It would be most cool if a neurosurgeon included a slide about the prevention of head injuries, or an AIDs doctor presenting on the epidemiology of AIDs. If they do this, then global health and prevention becomes part of their repertoire. We already have this lecture translated into Spanish, Russian and Arabic. If you would like to translate it into other languages, please let us know and write to me at ronaldlaporte@gmail.com. You would be listed as a translator. We have a short version and a long version, please review and additional ideas of what we should include.

Also, as seen below we have some of the best disaster lectures in the world. Should a disaster occur, we will distribute the lecture to all of you, and to the deans asking if all faculty could present at least one slide on the disaster. With this approach, it is simple, with virtually no preparation to bring at least some global health knowledge into the classroom

You climb to reach the summit, but once there, discover that all roads lead down. Stanislaw

Disasters

This has been quite an exciting year for JIT lectures, we are very pleased and wanted to thank you all. We are now in very good shape in that we cover 10 of the major disasters with state of the art lectures. We owe much to Ali Aradalan from Tehran for developing most of the lectures, Eugene Shubnikov from Russia does not sleep much during a disaster and all those for translating. Mita and Tom are updating the airline safety lectures. About the only major disasters where we do not have lectures are oil spills, floods, and drought. We are set such that after any major disaster we will distribute the lecture to the world. We have it set that if a disaster occurs at night in the US, Eugene will distribute the lecture from Russia, if it is in the Americas, Meredith will.

Nicholas Padilla did something great. Hurricane Alex hit northern Mexico. He distributed the Spanish version of the lecture about 2 weeks after the hurricane hit, which was late for Hurricane Alex. However he reasoned that hurricane Alex made people aware of the hurricane season, and thus when hurricane Bonnie, or hurricane, Carl, or hurricane Donna comes, people will be very aware of the lecture that was distributed. We are also using this approach in Japan for Aug. 6, which is the sad anniversary of the Atom Bomb. We will provide a shortened version of Borys Ledoschchuk's lecture that has been translated into Japanese.

We are all very proud of our nuclear lecture by Borys Ledoschchuk from the Ukraine. We saw considerable global interest using Google Trends when North Korea exploded their bomb. If a nuclear incident occurs, we are ready. If there is an incident the global interest would be enormous. Nurka, has translated the lecture into Bosnian, Khowlah, Nasrin, and Kawkab into Arab, Yingyun into Chinese, Nicholas into Spanish. Borys has done a wonderful job with his lecture. We have been very fortunate to have 2 of the world's leaders in Nuclear Science and Health, Borys Ledoschchus, and Neil Wald. Borys was the primary health scientist for Chernobyl, and Niel Wald for Three Mile Island. We have now 11 lectures about nuclear and health.

I had gained the summit of a commanding ridge, and looking round with astonishing delight, beheld the ample plains, the beautiful tracts below. D. Boone

The World's attention span in 48 hours:

Michael Jackson, Tsunami, Haiti, Hurricane Rita:

Q. What do they have in common?

A. These were unexpected events that captured the world's attention. We just submitted the BMJ a cool paper where we looked at the epidemiology of interest of these 4 concepts (plus many others) using Google Trends. Google Trends is an exciting tool where if you put in a search term, it provides a daily count of the number of searches on that term. Thus you could put in the term Elvis, World Cup, Pittsburgh, and you can see the periods of most and least interest. We put in the 4 terms. It is very interesting the Michael Jackson's death was 4 times more interesting than the 200,000 people killed in Haiti. What was most exciting is that despite the differences in interest, the "world attention curve" was virtually identical. One saw a rapid rise of interest for 48 hours followed by a precipitous decline. The same pattern appeared for Superbowl, Christmas, Katrina, etc.

There thus appears to be a world attention span curve, and that global attention lasts only 2 days. Isn't that cool? Try this yourself, as the epidemiology of interest is most fascinating.

Sabbatical and Funding:

We have had several leaders come to work with us supported by IREX, Fulbright Scholarship, and National Governments. Kuntoro, a great friend of ours will be spending 4 months with us starting in September. If you are considering a sabbatical, why not consider coming to Pittsburgh to work with us. Many people now consider Pittsburgh the Paris of the United States. Although I have no money, I write extraordinarily good letters for sabbaticals. Also, if you find a funding source where we both can be funded, we are happy to help.

Gifts: You might consider donating a gift to the Supercourse (www.pitt.edu/~super1/). We are poor but effective. If you could contribute, we potentially could become Semi-poor and even more effective.

Faina's Lecture of the week

What is the link between the disease and the genome? If that's the question you have been asking all your life. Doug Brutlag, professor emeritus from Stanford may have an answer for you. Please visit his lecture at <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec37611/001.htm>. It is just one of the 20 lectures that Dr. Brutlag is donating to the Supercourse. The Brutlag Bioinformatics Group is located in the [Biochemistry Department](#) at [Stanford University](#) and is also affiliated with the [Stanford Center for Biomedical Informatics Research](#) in the [Department of Medicine, Stanford Medical School](#). The primary goal of this research group was understanding the meaning of the genomic information and how this information is expressed using computational means. Dr. Brutlag is also interested in the problems of predicting biological function of genes and gene products from their sequence and structure (sometimes

known as functional genomics). Please visit Dr. Brutlag's lectures to find out more about this exciting area!

News from WHO

We would like to announce the launching of a new electronic publication for the surveillance of and response to public health events in the Western Pacific Region. Western Pacific Surveillance and Response (WPSAR) is an initiative of the World Health Organization, Western Pacific Regional Office, and aims to provide a platform for information sharing in our region. WPSAR will be open access and submitted manuscripts will undergo peer-review. The types of articles include letters to the editor, perspectives, case reports/case series, surveillance reports, surveillance system implementation/evaluation, risk assessments and original research.

Journal articles will be published an article at a time building up to an issue every quarter. This means that articles will be uploaded onto the website after the review and editing process therefore allowing timely dissemination. Each issue will have several articles dedicated to a theme. The theme for the first issue is 'Influenza - Lessons Learnt'. For more information please visit the website (www.wpro.who.int/wpsar).

You can subscribe to email alerts for new publications through the website. We are also looking for potential authors and reviewers. If you are interested in submitting a manuscript to WPSAR please visit the website for the instructions to authors. If you are interested in reviewing articles for WPSAR please email WPSAR@wpro.who.int.

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Best Regards from the Supercourse Team

Ron, Faina, Eugene, Mita, Meredith, Francois, Ella, Kawkab, Eric, Ali, Jesse, Nicholas, Ismail, Vint, Nabil, Gil

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