

Supercourse Newsletter
May 1, 2003

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

142 days and counting

The wedding of clinical medicine (Hippocrates) and prevention (Hygiene) are fast approaching. Soon it will be with us, and we will distribute the lecture all over the world. We are confident that we can hit a million, may be 10 million!!

Roadmap and Tourbus

There is precedence. In 1994 a brilliant young graduate student named Patrick Crispen took it upon himself to teach the world about the Internet. The lessons were called road map to the Internet. He developed a series of lectures that he would send out on a weekly basis. Tom Songer and I are some of the old coots on the Internet, and we learned from Patrick. His approach was fantastic, he was from the Southern US. He would teach out how to use FTP, while at the same time giving us the receipt for Squirrel soup (ugh!). His approach was to send emails to as many lists that he could find across the world informing people about his lessons. It was wildly successful. There were so many people coming into his site, it crashed his universities computer. The numbers of people he had learning from this single lesson was staggering. He estimated that in 1995 at least 500,000 people had taken the lessons. This was at a time that the internet was 1/100,000 the size it is now. If we translate this into what we are planning today, this would be 500,000,000. Not bad. Patrick is a funny, brilliant person. He followed this up with the tour bus, which took you for a tour of the Internet. No one has ever tried to do what he did in health, or in fact any field. It was a magnificent show, and got many people interesting in the Internet. <http://www.tourbus.com/>

Salaries should be based on how many you save

We received a great note from Orlando Barrionuevo in Argentina. He said: "You make us understand that Epidemiology isn't just a cold collection of data loaded into Epilinfo, but a warm (and even funny) way to find out answers for people in need." He was really great about this. It drives me nuts when "real" doctors look down on epidemiologists. I always look them straight in the eye and say "How many people has your profession saved this century?" I talk with my friends who are neurosurgeons, they say...well, In the world since 1900 neurosurgeons have saved about 500,000, about 200,000 we have had no effect, and we killed 300,000 for a net savings of +200,000. This is okay, but not too great. I hate it even worse when medical students look down on epidemiology students, as medical students have probably saved 500,000, had no effect on 1,000,000 and probably killed 10,000,000, with a net effect of -8,500,000 – not a great showing...But we in prevention have probably prevented 3,000,000,000 deaths. We have done good!! It is time to celebrate with Hygiene. (What I do not understand is why neurosurgeons are paid 20 times more than us). Part of the reason for Sept. 19, is that we plan to pass a bill in all the governments of the world where one's salary is based upon the numbers of deaths that are prevented. If this were the case, medical students would be bankrupt, the neurosurgeons would be living under bridges and we would be kings and queens living in our castles with Caviar and Mercedes!!

Lecture:

Faina has redone the lecture and it is beautiful. We will be sending this to you next week for your comments. Once we get your comments back, we will be ready to start to plan the distribution scheme. We would like for you to think about how we can “count” the numbers of people who see the lecture.

Lecture of the week

Rashid Chotani from Johns Hopkins university shared a very informative presentation on identification of bioterrorism agents. The lecture takes the reader on a journey from the history of the biological warfare starting at 6th century BC to the identification of modern bioterrorism agents, including anthrax and smallpox. This colorful lecture consists of 2 parts with over 30 slides in each of them <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec10181/index.htm> and contains very practical illustrations of the bioterrorism agents. The lecture fits very nicely with the Supercourse lecture on terrorism, developed by the Global Health Network last year. This lecture is recommended for healthcare and public health students, health department employees, and anybody else interested in this topic. Please contact Supercourse developers at super1@pitt.edu if you would like to contribute another lecture to this category

Best regards from the Prevention Roadmap

Hygienia, Ron, Faina, Mita, Eugene, EunRyoung, Tour bus driver, Julia, Wendy, Soni, Abed, Rania, Tom, Deb

If you would like to come off this list, please send a message to super2@pitt.edu