

Supercourse Newsletter
www.pitt.edu/~super1/
March 25, 2011

Dear Friends,

Our hearts go out to our friends in Japan after suffering from the tragedy of the Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear. It is extremely difficult times in Japan. We in the Supercourse hope that we have and can help in the future, even if just a little bit.

Walter Hayes created a just in time lecture for the Japan disaster within 12 hours after the event. Within 14 hours Eugene Shubnikov was able to put the lecture on the web, and to link it to 3 of our major disaster lectures, Earthquake, Tsunami and Radiation health. These lectures had been translated into Japanese and up to 13 different languages. Within 15 hours after the earthquake we notified all 50,000 of you and distributed the lecture to many thousands of people through you as a result of your generosity and copying the lecture to your colleagues.. Our radiation lecture was distributed hours before there was major damage to the nuclear reactor. Many of the deans of the medical and public health schools shared it with their faculty and students. We had the first lecture on the Japan disaster on the web, which became one of the leading lectures.

Our purpose was simple, to teach people about this and other disasters at the time of a learning moment. Good science will trump some of the fear and uncertainty surrounding the disaster. If you evaluate the interest in the disasters using Google Trends, you will see that there is a spike of interest that lasted 48 hours, by sharing the lecture at 15 hours we were able to have top flight, up to date information available before the interest started to wane. We are pleased to be able to educate 1000s if not millions of students world wide. We thank you, and the medical and public health schools across the world and we hoped we helped..

We feel that at the time of a disaster, educators, and people need the best possible information from the leading scientists of the world. We have been fortunate to work with some of the major leaders. You can see our lecture at: <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec41441/index.htm>

We were pleased that we have been able to reduce our response time from about when we created our first JIT lecture on Airline safety, of 2 weeks to now about ½ a day. When we hear about a disaster we spring into action world wide, from Russia, to Iran, to Japan, to Egypt with leading disaster experts. We are also prepared for local disasters, suppose there is a flood in India, we will customize our flood lecture that disaster expert Ali Ardalan from Iran created and share it with those in India within hours. We hope in the near future that we can push out the JIT lectures through cell phones. We may have taught more people about the science of disasters than any other scientific group, combined. Our teaching helps not only the current disaster, but we teach to help people in future disasters.

“All things entail rising and falling timing. You must be able to discern this.” Musashi

We have seen that people often pay more attention to us, a group of scientists world wide, then they would their governments, the media and industry. We are working to bridge between the supercourse and media, as we prefer to have scientists provide information to the media, instead of having the TV newscasters as epidemiologists. Also, when this happens we can reach millions as we Jesse Huang did when our H1N1 lecture taught 40 million in China.

I personally wanted to thank our wonderful global team who did a remarkable job in building and sharing the earthquake knowledge. I also wanted to that you for distributing the information about the disasters to your faculty, students and friends. We have taught many children and adults.

“Every child grows; Everything depends on the teacher” Suzuki

Superbook, Supercourse: John Cairns is a member of the National Academy of Science, and a most prolific Supercourse member with 12 lectures. John is doing something both novel and cool. You all might consider this. John is writing a book, for each chapter he will be developing a supercourse lecture. We have seen that the lectures draw peoples eyes, and there can be a major increase in book sales. We would like to see all Supercourse lectures to also be on the NYTimes best selling list.

MMPH program: In the next note we will be sending to you information about our Multidisciplinary Masters of Public Health program. I run this program. This is a one year program leading to a MPH, at the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh <http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=203>
About 80% of the program are Physicians, however, we encourage other professionals to apply. The MPH can be combined with a global health certificate as well. A MPH is a very marketable degree world wide. Many of our students are a part of international projects and are making a large difference in the world. There is still time to apply. Sadly, we do not have funding. However, if you find a potential funding source, we will write a letter for you. Please write to ronaldlaporte@gmail.com

“To teach is to also learn”, (Japanese proverb)

Faina’s pick of the week

We in public health know that treating some of the chronic diseases is hugely difficult. For example, cancer is a very difficult condition to effectively manage, as we do not have good treatment for many types of cancer. Prevention is a good way to reduce cancer incidence, but how do we prevent cancer? An interesting option has been suggested and implemented in some countries, that of taxation of cancer causing agents such as cigarettes. Is this a good option of cancer prevention or does it hurt the people that it's trying to protect. Please review some of these issues by visiting a new lecture by Julie Tambellini from the University of Pittsburgh

Taxation and Cancer Prevention -

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec41621/index.htm>

Best wishes from:

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