Lessons Learned Teaching General Chemistry via Video Teleconference

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SUMMARY: In a video teleconference offering of a chemistry course, the instructor needs to take practical steps to leverage the video conference format, including exploiting associated technologies, such that student learning can be advanced.

The teleconference equipment has to work, always
- Interactive Video Distance Learning (IVDL)
- 99% technical success = 1% failure

Coddle the satellite audiences
- Address questions to the satellite locations
- Introduce yourself in-person on-site
- Broadcast from satellite locations
- Offer tutoring sessions to satellite students
- Show up at satellite location on test day

Distribute all course materials/content online
- On-line homework
- Submit all assignments on-line
- Return all graded assignments on-line

Exploit all the technologies you have at your fingertips
- Multiple cameras
- Audience camera
- Video recording
- Video archiving
- Pod-casts

Anticipate having less time to cover the material
- Plan to solve fewer example problems in-class

Get your students to warm up to the format on the first day
- The first day sets the tone
- Explain the technology
- Have students practice asking questions
- Don’t surprise the students on the first day that there is no teacher in the room

Make PowerPoint presentations bold
- Bold fonts, plain color scheme, BIG figures
- Bullets don’t kill people, bullet points do!

Solve math problems using a document camera or Smart-
- Seize opportunity to post .pdf scans of problem solutions

Make light of the format
- Set the tone

Today’s population embraces technology and all of the advantages that technology can offer. As such, any negative stigmata surrounding a video teleconference course is unwarranted.