Synchronous Learning in a Virtual Environment

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What is synchronous learning?

When I am trying to decide, I ask myself, ‘Is this a class I could attend while folding my laundry?’ If the answer is yes, I watch the recording. If the answer is no, I attend the live session

Dan Levy, Harvard Business Review
- Real time
- Learning simultaneously
- Can:
  - Ask questions
  - Get answers
  - Discuss and debate
  - Collaborate
  - Form a community of learning
Formal teaching

Please see the book for great content on simulation, technological innovations, Expert by Experience sessions
Online advantages

- Geography no longer a consideration!
  - Though time zones may be
- Time commitment can be reduced
  - Faculty availability
- Learner preference
  - Comfort factor
- Room for creativity
  - New tech for engagement
Risks and barriers

- **Multitasking**
  - How many of you have emails open now?
- **Social pressure online**
  - Engagement can vary
- **Technological requirements**
  - Costly and risk of exclusion / disadvantage
- **Fatigue**
- **Social connectedness**
Maximising engagement

- Move from passive acceptance of information to active discussion
  - Overcome lack of social pressure
- Including all
  - Students prefer this!
  - Fairness important to students
  - Ground rules - shared ownership
  - Task allocation
Social cohesion

- Small groups
  - Check ins
  - “Question of the week”
  - Micro-breakout rooms
- Consistency of groups
The question of cameras

- Setting expectations
- Normalising cameras as on
- Role modelling
- Staying the course
- Consistency of tutors
- Backgrounds
Useful tech (not exhaustive)

Which would be an appropriate initial treatment for depression

- Atomoxetine
- Aripiprazole
- Sertraline
- Venlafaxine
Which would be an appropriate initial treatment for depression:

- Sertraline
- Venlafaxine
- Atomoxetine
- Aripiprazole

Correct answer: Sertraline

You're on the podium!
A 24 year woman presents with bipolar disorder presents with a manic episode. Which of the following medications would be least appropriate?

- Aripiprazole: 11%
- Clonazepam: 21%
- Lamotrigine: 16%
- Olanzapine: 52%
- Sodium valproate: 52%
Have you got your email open right now?

Options:
- Yes
- No
- I couldn't possibly comment
Or keep it simple....

- Electronic raised hands
- Chat bar
- Direct messaging to facilitator
- Whiteboards
Clinical settings
Learning in clinical settings online

- Essential for our future workforce
- Streaming options
  - Large groups
- Live attendance remotely
  - Students on screen
Attending clinics - considerations

- No access to electronic care records
- Need joining instructions in advance
  - Log in details, software requirements
- Agree in advance the role that the student will play in the consultation
- Seeing a patient alone?
  - Ensure there is a way that the senior can join immediately in case of immediate concerns.
- Consent
  - The Medical Schools Council - Verbal consent is sufficient for consultations
  - Recorded written consent should be sought
- Cover skills for remote consultations in feedback
Don’t fill in your phone number of Date of Birth
Be honest!

- Can be buggy
  - If you drop out then may need to refresh
- Struggles most when >3 people in the meeting
- Headphones advised
- **Mute when not talking**
  - Feedback will frustrate everyone
But....

- How to drive learning remotely?
  - Easy to forget the students are at home!
  - Pre-meet and debriefs essential
- More exposure = better feedback
  - Students can do a lot
- Combine with asynchronous material for downtime
Finally

- Consider your own teaching set up
  - Webcams a sound investment
    - Undergraduate tariff can afford it!
  - Elevate camera
  - Away from windows
  - Headphones + microphone where possible

- Consider use of subtitles
  - Not perfect but help some students a lot
Thank you

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