Teaching Using UMConnect

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Where in the world is Helen?

• Johannesburg, South Africa
• Sitting in bed with Eliza the cat
• Time in SA: 1:00 a.m. Friday (7 hours ahead)
In Google Earth:
26° 4'6.89"S, 28° 0'40.50"E

Key Features of UMConnect

• Real time connection
• Students see & hear instructor and anything that instructor shows on screen
• Instructor can have students become actively engaged through typing responses in chat windows & responding to polls
• Students who are not in class can join from home (very useful during H1N1 pandemic!)
• Instructor can record the session for students to view later (or student who missed class to view)
Anatomy of the UMConnect Screen

Tips for Tech Side of Use

- Use PowerPoint to focus on key points (must be .ppt and not .pptx)
- If bandwidth an issue, don’t use video or “freeze” video
- Promote only one person at a time (otherwise chaotic!)
- Use hands-free mic (rather than push to talk)
- Enter “room” a good 15 minutes ahead of time: have person at other end there to do sound check & make sure everything is working
- Have Skype connection too as back-up to trouble shoot
Setting up Meeting

Give it a name that will make sense 6 months from now (so when you look over your list of past meetings in UMConnect later on, you will know what this session was!)

Set date and starting time - making sure to set the start time 15 minutes before the class actually begins (so you can go in early and check everything is working)

It is too complicated to have only registered users - better to just allow anyone who has URLs, because (a) strangers won’t find you by chance! (b) if anyone comes in by chance, you can always kick them out!

Summary to give participants more info on the session

Set duration for 30 minutes longer than session to allow time before and after for trouble shooting

Anyone who has the URL for the meeting can enter the room

Summary Info

Copy & paste this URL into your Moodle site & an email to students so they know how to access the UMConnect session
Teaching Tips

• Talk slowly!
• Have facilitator at the other end to be your eyes (e.g. tell you when people are ready)
• Avoid talking “at” students all the time -- have them be actively involved:
  – Poll them to check understanding
  – Use poll results as starting point for discussion
  – Have students work in groups, reporting on their group discussions using chat window and/or presenter coming up to the podium to report