



Lecture-Capture Software and the Teaching of Soils

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Several companies now offer software that can record academic lectures and place them on password-protected course websites for future review by students. Using lecture-capture software offers several advantages for the instructor and the students, including: 1) The ability for students who miss class for legitimate reasons (e.g., participation in school-sanctioned extra-curricular activities, illness or family emergencies) to get lecture materials by logging into the class website. This provides these students with a more complete exposure to the material than simply copying a classmate's notes. 2) The instructor is able to direct students who miss class for legitimate reasons to the recorded lecture rather than needing to spend time going over the material with those students and that recap does not end up being rushed. 3) The ability to address course conflicts for graduating seniors by allowing them to take the lecture portion of the class via recorded lecture. 4) Students who desire more in-depth learning are able to go back to selected portions of previous lectures to review and reconsider a topic of discussion or to fill in vague sections of their notes. There are also potential disadvantages to the use of lecture-capture software, including: 1) decreased student attendance in class because they feel they can watch class later at a time of their own choosing, 2) additional time spent by the instructor dealing with the technology, and 3) problems with hardware or software during class time that prevents recording a given day's lecture. These problems can often be addressed or justified relatively easily. If problem 1 is of concern to an instructor it can be addressed by blocking online access to individual students who have a poor record of class attendance. In the case of problem 2, the extra time spent with the technology is often offset by a reduction in time answering questions from students who have missed class. Problem 3 does happen, but in the author's experience it is fairly rare, representing less than 5% of class sessions per semester. Student comments have been overwhelmingly favorable towards the use of captured lectures since the technology was first adopted in the author's classes in 2009.