Options for practicable update of an existing face-to-face course with e-learning methods

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Background: The scope of teaching content can not always correlate with the given time of face-to-face courses at medical universities. During classroom teaching it is usually difficult for lecturers to evaluate the knowledge and the achievement of learning objectives in large participant groups of students. In the meantime, at many universities there are offered online learning platforms and e-learning courses for students. But choosing the right e-learning methods for a course can be a challenge for lecturers.

Question: Which e-learning methods can be integrated in an existing face-to-face course (eg seminar with integrated exercise) without much additional time for lecturers and students?

Methods: As introduction of a course an "advance organizer" can be used. This "learning map" provides an organizational framework for how the content will be presented. An "advance organizer" is an introduction and transition to learning content based on a student’s prior knowledge. It includes pictures, diagrams, definitions and short texts, given by the lecturer. Students should print out the "advance organizer" and add their individual notes during the course. Before the face-to-face course an online-quiz (eg multiple choice questions) is offered to students as an self-test of their knowledge. After the face-to-face course, students are able to hear and see the lecture again as online-video on an online-learning platform.

As closing activity, an online discussion forum can be used. The students are divided into groups, each group has to solve a clinical case in a given period. The lecturer acts as a "tele-tutor" and gives step-by-step additional information to the online forum.

Also, another online quiz can be used for repetition of the teaching content.

Conclusions: The combination of face-to-face classroom methods and computer-mediated activities offers students synchronous and asynchronous (location-and time independent) learning. Apart from the technical infrastructure, the selection of e-learning methods is dependent on the course, the lecturers and the knowledge of the students. But even existing face-to-face courses can be enhanced with e-learning methods with little additional time for lecturers and students.

References: