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COLLEGE 2.0 When Computers Leave Classrooms, So Does Boredom

By JEFFREY R. YOUNG.

José A. Bowen, dean of the Meadows School of the Arts, has challenged his colleagues to "teach naked"—by which he means, *sans* machines.

Class time should be reserved for discussion...especially now that students can download lectures online and find libraries of information on the Web.

When students reflect on their college years...they're going to remember challenging debates and talks with their professors. Lively interactions are what teaching is all about...discouraged by preset collections of slides.

The least boring teaching methods were found to be seminars, practical sessions, and group discussions...In other words; tech-free classrooms were the most engaging.

...computers have probably led to a slight improvement in teaching. But technology has hardly revolutionized the classroom experience for most college students, despite millions of dollars in investment and early predictions that going digital would force professors to rethink their lectures and would herald a pedagogical renaissance.

...the information delivery common in today's classroom lectures should be...podcasts or online videos before class sessions. To make sure students tune in, he gives them short online multiple-choice tests.

... debate ... and get the students to weigh in...if the student believes they can contribute, they're a whole lot more motivated to enter the discourse, and to enter the discipline." ...don't be boring.

Strangely enough, the people who are most resistant to this model are the students, who are used to being spoon-fed material...response from students is typically, "I paid for a college education and you're not going to lecture?"

Now that so many colleges offer low-cost online alternatives to the traditional campus experience, and some universities give away videos of their best professors' lectures, colleges must **make sure their in-person teaching really is superior to those alternatives** (bold mine).

Now that an entire infrastructure for instant online delivery is widely in place, all that's left is the hard part of changing what happens in the classroom, which might need to stay a low-tech zone to survive.

From: The Chronicle of Higher Education issue dated July 24, 2009, Information Technology section. Full article: <http://chronicle.com/article/Teach-Naked-Effort-Strips/47398/>

MY \$.02: In my humble opinion this may be a good way to go but I don't believe we can abate the pervasive and ubiquitous use of technology in our classrooms. It does, however, beg the question for all faculty – what are you going to do about it?

May I encourage you to work with your colleagues to overtly identify the assets and liabilities created by these communication tools and think of strategies to maximize the assets and minimize the liabilities – and then publish for others to see and adapt for use.