

REPLACING MEDICAL CLASS LECTURE CASSETTE TAPES WITH DIGITAL AUDIO FILES

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Introduction

In Fall 2004, Dahlgren Memorial Library at GUMC began a pilot program to deliver recordings of medical school lectures online. This presentation explores the limits of technology and staff resources that the pilot revealed and evaluates the success of the Library's transition to a more robust process two semesters later. This information and experience will help departments who either plan to archive lectures on the Internet or who wish to improve a current service.

Abstract

After 15 years of providing lecture recordings via cassette tape, the Library decided to provide the lecture audio online only. The multi-step process that we initially used for delivering the digital files revealed three significant complications: 1) staffing cuts at the Library led to significant delays in making the lecture files available; 2) too many steps allowed increased opportunities for mistakes in the process; 3) intellectual property concerns required strict control on the file access, including restricted file types (streaming vs. downloadable) and password protection.

The Library implemented a new process for providing the files that employed student workers instead of Library staff members. This new process requires students to record, convert, embed, and deliver the files, including access to protected media servers. The Library chose to address IP and copyright issues directly with the student workers through training. The Library will evaluate the new process on four points: 1) reduced Library staff time; 2) contained student worker time; 3) reduced errors due to equipment or handling; and 4) expedited availability of files.