



Clinical Skills Tutorials – Transitioning from in-person to Zoom tutorials

Four clinical skills tutors have transitioned tutorials for all years 1&2 students to on-line synchronous learning using Zoom technologies. As Clinical Skills tutorials are designed to involve “hands-on” work for learners, our faculty are doing extraordinary work teaching these skills over Video Conference (VC) during this difficult time. Representatives from MedIT, Course Leadership and Faculty Development brought clinical skills tutors together to share their experiences and strategies and have shared the key messages here. The following suggestions may help to make the most of VC’ed tutorials until we can return to face-to-face sessions.

What strategies did you or your students use to make the most of your tutorial sessions?

- Webcam position is key to ensuring students can learn from your physical exam demonstration, tutors may need to spend extra time before the session figuring out the most effective position for the webcam (i.e. positioned down showing the abdomen during an abdominal exam).
- History-taking skills (as opposed to physical exam skills) are most easily demonstrated and practiced in VC’ed environments. Tutors found facilitating students to practice these skills an effective use of time.
- It can be difficult to manage chat boxes and raised hands while delivering content. Writing students names down on a separate piece of paper was helpful when needing to refer or ask questions of particular individuals.
- Tutors also found setting up the space behind them with a volunteer patient or flipchart behind them as an effective way of bringing the classroom alive.
- Tutors would ask a student to be the facilitator of the session, that way the tutor could focus on the demonstration portion while student questions were documented.
- Begin the session by outlining the goals of the tutorial, and share any expectations you may have regarding student participation (e.g. whether cameras should be on/off, whether students should jump in with questions verbally or over chat, etc.)

How did your role as a tutor change, with tutorials being hosted over Zoom?

- It was more challenging to facilitate discussion with all students
- With the lack of hands-on patients, tutors adjusted to the VC environment by demonstrating to students how to practice exams on themselves (when possible and safe).
- The whiteboard feature in Zoom can be cumbersome, instead, students would use a shared google doc to collectively take notes on the session.
- Tutors used YouTube videos and detailed powerpoint slides so that the screen was the patient and students could demonstrate where to put their hands and questions to ask the patient.
- It is difficult to assess the engagement of each learner a large group of 12-24 learners. This was made more difficult when students had their cameras turned off, or when the screen was taken up by teaching materials. Breaking students up into smaller groups and asking them to answer questions for different components of the session is one strategy that helped tutors better monitor student participation.